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# ISRAEL & BABYLON

BY

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To

Professor Arthur S. Peake

MY TEACHER AND FRIEND.

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## PREFACE.

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IT may be desirable that I should say why the subject *Israel and Babylon* has been chosen for the twenty-fifth Hartley Lecture. It is generally accepted that, even though we may regard the Bible as a unique book, we can no longer study it satisfactorily in isolation. The recognition of this truth has deeply influenced the whole movement of Biblical scholarship during the last generation. Pioneer work in this direction was done by Wellhausen and Robertson Smith, who showed how important for a study of the Old Testament is a knowledge of Arabian customs and religion. More recently attention has been focussed upon Babylon, Egypt, and the peoples who were Israel's predecessors and neighbours in Canaan. The study of Apocalyptic literature and of the mystery religions, too, has profoundly affected recent critical discussion of the New Testament.

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While the Biblical student must devote attention to the whole series of problems which develop out of this extended view, I venture to think that for the Old Testament none of them is so important as that raised by a comparison of the religion and traditions of Babylon with those of Israel. The literature dealing with the subject is so extensive as to be almost intimidating. There are many books which deal with individual problems or groups of problems. Important relevant articles may be found in the Encyclopædias and Bible Dictionaries. Modern commentaries, too, devote considerable space to Babylonian parallels. At the same time the ordinary student or minister who has not access to a large library may find it difficult to get a comprehensive view of the problem. In this volume I have attempted to provide material which will enable him to do this. My aim, indeed, has been to write such a book as I should have been glad to have written by some one else for me. It is impossible to treat the subject without an adequate presentation of the material, which must be my apology for a certain amount of discussion that may, I fear, seem rather arid. So far as I am aware, there is no single book which traverses all the ground I have attempted to cover.

I should like here to express my deep sense of gratitude to the late Professor H. W. Hogg, under whose inspiring teaching I studied cuneiform for several years. My immediate object was to use the Assyrian language as a help to the better understanding of Hebrew, the teaching of which has been my special work. For various reasons I was not able to prosecute the study afterwards, and I do not wish to pose as an expert Assyriologist. Of Sumerian I know only a few words, and so for the one or two translations from that language I am entirely dependent upon others. In the case of those documents whose originals are in Semitic cuneiform I have made free use of the translations of Ungnad in Gressmann's *Texte und Bilder*, of Dhorme, and of Rogers, whose *Cuneiform Parallels to the Old Testament* may be commended to the reader as by far the best collection of such material in English. For these, however, my dependence is less absolute, as I have sought to check and control the translations by constant reference to the originals in transcription. In cases where a translation has been borrowed word for word due acknowledgment is made in the text.

To Dr. A. S. Peake I owe a very great debt. He has most generously placed his library at my disposal, and, despite an overwhelming pressure of

**Preface.**

work, has found time to read through my manuscript, making valuable suggestions and criticisms, and also to read the proofs. To him I am indebted, among other things, for the quotations on pp. 38f. and for the bibliographies on pp. 116f. My thanks are due also to Dr. S. A. Cook, of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge for suggestions as to lines of study, and to Mr. C. J. Gadd, of the British Museum, for bringing to my notice Kugler's *Im Bannkreis Babels*, to which I have made frequent reference in the discussion of Pan-Babylonianism. In conclusion I ought to say that the substance of the fifth chapter was read as a paper before the Society for Old Testament Study, and is appearing in the forthcoming issue of the *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*.

W. L. WARDLE.

April, 1925.

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## BIBLIOGRAPHY.

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List of Abbreviations and Books to which reference has been made. Abbreviated titles used in the notes are given in brackets.

AJSL. *American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures.*  
BM. British Museum.  
H. Bahr. (BP) *Die Babylonischen Busspsalmen und das Alte Testament.*  
B. Baentsch. (AM) *Altorientalischer und Israelitischer Monotheismus.*  
G. A. Barton. *Exodus-Leviticus-Numeri.*  
BM. (published by) *Yahweh before Moses.*  
The Babylonian Story of the Deluge and the Epic of Gilgamish.  
F. Boll. " *The Babylonian Legends of the Creation.*  
K. Budde. *Sterngläube und Sterndeutung.*  
E. A. W. Budge. *Das Alte Testament und die Ausgrabungen.*  
C. F. Burney. *The Book of the Dead.*  
CAH. " *Israel's Settlement in Canaan.*  
W. Caspari. *Judges.*  
The Cambridge Ancient History.  
(ABP) *Die Religion in den Assyrisch-Babylonischen Busspsalmen.*  
A. Causse. (PIRO) *Les Prophètes d'Israël et les Religions de l'Orient.*  
A. T. Clay. *Amurru.*  
" (EOA) *The Empire of the Amorites.*  
" (Deluge) *A Hebrew Deluge Story in Cuneiform.*  
A. Condamin. (Origin) *The Origin of Biblical Traditions.*  
Babylone et la Bible (in the Dictionnaire Apologétique de la Foi Catholique).  
S. A. Cook. (MH) *The Laws of Moses and the Code of Hammurabi.*  
A. E. Cowley. *The Religion of Ancient Palestine.*  
*The Hittites.*

F. Cumont. *Astrology and Religion among the Greeks and Romans.*

S. Daiches. *Babylonian Oil Magic in the Talmud and in the later Jewish Literature.*

Fried. Delitzsch. *Babel and Bible.*  
" *Mehr Licht.*

P. Dhorme. *(Choix) Choix de Textes Religieux Assyro-Babyloniens.*

S. R. Driver. *Modern Research as illustrating the Bible.*  
*Genesis* (second edition).

E. Bi. " *Encyclopædia Biblica.*

ERE. *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics,* Hastings.

B. D. Eerdmans. *Alttestamentliche Studien.*

L. R. Farnell. *Greece and Babylon.*

J. G. Frazer. *(FLOT) Folk-Lore in the Old Testament.*  
" *The Golden Bough.*

C. J. Gadd. *The Fall of Nineveh.*

" H. Gressmann. *The Early Dynasties of Sumer and Akkad.*  
(TuB) *Allorientalische Texte und Bilder zum Alten Testamente.*

H. Gunkel. *(Mose) Mose und seine Zeit.*  
" *Israel und Babylonien.*  
" *Genesis* (third edition).

H. Guthe. *(SC) Schöpfung und Chaos.*

HDB. *Geschichte des Volkes Israel.*

P. S. P. Handcock. *Dictionary of the Bible,* Hastings.

J. Hehn. " *Mesopotamian Archæology.*

F. Hommel. *(BP) Babylonian Penitential Psalms.*  
*Der Israelitische Sabbath.*  
*Die altorientalischer Denkmäler und das Alte Testament.*

ICC. *International Critical Commentary.*

JAOS. *Journal of the American Oriental Society.*

JEA. *Journal of the Egyptian Association.*

JPOS. *Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society.*

JSOR. *Journal of the Society of Oriental Research.*

M. Jastrow. *(HBT) Hebrew and Babylonian Traditions.*  
" *Immortality among the Babylonians and Assyrians. (In Religion and the Future Life.)* E. H. Sneath.

" *(Religion) The Religion of Babylon and Assyria.*

" *Die Religion Babyloniens und Assyriens.*

" *(Beliefs) Religious Belief in Babylonia and Assyria.*

A. Jeremias. *Der Alte Orient und die Aegyptische Religion.*

A. Jeremias (Handbuch) *Handbuch der altorientalischen Geisteskultur.*  
 „ *Hölle und Paradies bei den Babylonier.*  
 (English translation—*The Babylonian Conception of Heaven and Hell*).  
 „ *(KKB) Im Kampfe um Babel und Bibel.*  
 „ *(MS) Monotheistische Strömungen innerhalb des Babylonischen Religion.*  
 „ *Der Einfluss Babyloniens auf das Verständnis des Alten Testamentes.*  
 „ *(OTLA) The Old Testament in the Light of the Ancient East.*  
 J. Jeremias. *Moses und Hammurabi.*  
 A. Jirku. *(AK) Altorientalischer Kommentar zum Alten Testament.*  
 C. H. W. Johns. *Babylonian and Assyrian Laws, Contracts, and Letters.*  
 „ *The Oldest Code of Laws in the World.*  
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 „ *(Legends) Legends of Babylon and Egypt in relation to Hebrew Tradition.*  
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 „ *(CVI) Geschichte des Volkes Israel (fourth edition).*  
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 A. S. Peake.  
 T. E. Peet.  
 R. W. Rogers.  
 SAT.  
 H. Schäfer.  
 V. Scheil.  
 A. Schmidt.  
 E. Sellin.  
 J. Skinner.  
 Sidney Smith.  
 W. R. Smith.  
 P. Volz.  
 O. Weber.  
 F. Wilke.  
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 ZA.  
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 ZAW.

*Exodus.*  
*Sabbat und Woche im Alten Testament.*  
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*Oxford Editions of Cuneiform Texts.*  
*Der Kampf um Bibel und Babel.*  
*The Roots of Hebrew Prophecy and Jewish Apocalyptic.*  
*Egypt and the Old Testament.*  
*(CP) Cuneiform Parallels to the Old Testament.*  
*Die Schriften des Alten Testaments.*  
*Die Religion und Kunst von El-Amarna.*  
*La Loi De Hammourabi.*  
*Gedanken über die Entwicklung der Religion auf Grund der babylonischen Quellen.*  
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*Introduction to the Old Testament.*  
*Genesis.*  
*The First Campaign of Sennacherib.*  
*The Religion of the Semites.*  
*Mose.*  
*(Literatur) Die Literatur der Babylonier und Assyrer.*  
*Die politische Wirksamkeit der Propheten Israels.*  
*(GI) Geschichte Israels.*  
*Abraham als Babylonier : Joseph als Aegypter.*  
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*Zeitschrift für Assyriologie.*  
*Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft.*  
*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft.*

N.B.—The Semitic consonants usually transliterated by *h* with a diacritical point are represented throughout the book by *h*, as it has not been found possible to print the diacritical point.

# ISRAEL AND BABYLON.

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## CHAPTER I.

### *Introduction.*

DURING the last two or three generations the range of man's knowledge has been extended in many directions, but few of the achievements of modern science surpass the marvellous advance that has been made towards the recovery of man's past history. Less than a hundred years ago ancient history meant the history of the Greeks and Romans, and extended back only to less than a thousand years B.C. Of the earlier times practically all that was known was the history contained in the Old Testament. Not unnaturally the Hebrews were looked upon as the most ancient race in the world. Now the unveiling of the great civilizations of Babylonia and Egypt has wrought a revolution, and we find that the Hebrews are comparatively a young people in the development of the human race. On the one hand this has produced a sense of bewilderment, comparable with that which was

felt when the science of astronomy first taught man that his earth was but a very minor sphere among the many revolving in the heavens. On the other hand a flood of light has been thrown on the Old Testament, which enables us to understand it as we have never been able to understand it before.

The most important step towards the reading of ancient history was the decipherment of ancient forms of writing to which the key had been lost. Curiously enough it was in the same year, 1802, that a beginning was made towards the explanation both of the Egyptian hieroglyphics and of the cuneiform script that originated in Babylonia. Much laborious work remained to be done, and in the former case it was thirty, in the latter case nearly fifty, years before the attempt to understand the writing passed from the stage of experiment into that of scientific knowledge. So great is the mass of material which has been recovered since the languages were deciphered that the documents already made accessible would fill an extensive library, though probably there remain as many more yet to be dealt with.<sup>1</sup>

It may be of interest to say a few words about two sources of these documents to which frequent reference is made in what follows. In 1853 at Kouyunjik, the site of ancient Nineveh, Rassam discovered the "library" belonging to the palace of the famous Assyrian king, Ashurbanipal, who

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Driver, *Modern Research as Illustrating the Bible*. Lecture I.

in 648 B.C. deposed his brother from the throne of Babylon, and made that country a mere province of Assyria. This collection contained tens of thousands of clay tablets, systematically arranged on shelves. These were inscribed with literature of many kinds : in addition to the official archives there were poetry, sacred and profane, historical, and scientific works. Ashurbanipal employed scribes to copy the documents which made up the classic literature of Babylonia, that his collection might be as complete as possible. Though other large collections of tablets have since been found elsewhere—thirty thousand were recovered at Telloh—it is chiefly to the literary enthusiasm of this monarch that we are indebted for the enlargement of our knowledge of the Babylonian inscriptions.

For the discovery of the other source referred to we are indebted partly to accident. A peasant woman digging among the ruins at Tell-el-Amarna, about 170 miles South of Cairo, found some tablets inscribed with cuneiform characters. So little did she realize their value that she disposed of her interest in the find for about two shillings. The tablets proved eventually to be the archives of the Egyptian kings Amenhotep III and IV,<sup>1</sup> and they have contributed more to our knowledge of the state of affairs in Canaan in the fifteenth and fourteenth centuries B.C. than we have learned from all other sources. But valuable as this find

<sup>1</sup> 1410-1375 B.C. and 1375-1360, respectively. The latter king was father-in-law of Tutankhamen.

has proved to be it was robbed of half its value by an unhappy series of accidents. The story is told by Sayce in his *Reminiscences*. That eminent Assyriologist had been accustomed for years to pass the winter in Egypt, and had invariably called at Tell-el-Amarna on his way down the Nile. The fellahin who discovered antiques looked upon him as a regular customer, and saved up all they found for him to purchase. By a perversity of fate the year 1887, when the tablets were found, was the only year he missed spending the winter on the Nile. The disastrous consequences may be described in his own words. "The antika-dealers regarded the tablets as so many worthless bricks. Most of them were thrown into sacks, and carried on donkey-back to Ekhmim. There M. Frénay, the French manager of the flour mills, who acted as an agent of the Louvre, bought a few, thinking, as he told me, that they might turn out to be of interest, and one of these was sent to the Louvre and shown to Oppert, the Professor of Assyriology. Oppert was old and blind, and pronounced it to be a forgery. The result was that no more were purchased by Frénay; the tablets were again carried on donkey-back along the banks of the Nile, and finally found their way to Luxor. By that time more than a third of them had been destroyed or mutilated, to the incalculable loss of science and history. Next to the historical books of the Old Testament the Tel el-Amarna tablets have proved to be the most valuable record which the ancient civilized world of the East has bequeathed to us."

What we now have is an index of what we should have possessed had the collection been preserved uninjured and intact.”<sup>1</sup> Some few tablets were actually smashed “by a man who fell out of the train, or fell on the platform.”<sup>2</sup> By these misfortunes science has sustained a loss perhaps greater than that occasioned by the burning of the library at Louvain. Budge stated that 310 tablets were actually found, but that some of these were broken “by the men who took them from the woman who first saw them, into several pieces, so that apparently 350 or 360 were found.”<sup>3</sup> At the time when Knudtzon published his magnificent edition of the tablets, in 1915, he reckoned that 200 pieces of the tablets were in the possession of the Royal Museum at Berlin, 82 in the British Museum, 50 in the Egyptian Museum at Cairo, 22 in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, and ten or a dozen in other hands. The condition of the tablets after their sad adventures may be gathered from the fact that of the twenty-two reckoned to the Ashmolean only two are complete. Since that date a few more have turned up at various intervals.

Before the revelation of these civilizations, which were old when Abraham was born, the Old Testament had been like a single star shining in a dark sky. These new and dazzling lights which suddenly dawned on the vision were in mere size so much larger that their brilliance dazzled some of their discoverers, and led

<sup>1</sup> Sayce, *Reminiscences*, pp. 251f. <sup>2</sup> Cf. Knudtzon, TA, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Knudtzon, TA, p. 6.

them to think that the single star they had known before shone only by the borrowed light of those that were newly revealed. It was supposed by some that there was hardly anything left for the Old Testament to call its own. Interest in the problems that had emerged was confined, however, to limited circles until the famous lectures of Friedrich Delitzsch<sup>1</sup> on Babel and Bible, delivered under the patronage of the Emperor of Germany in 1902, raised a great storm of controversy. Shortly afterwards arose the theory known as Pan-Babylonianism, associated chiefly with Winckler, which went to extreme lengths in its reduction of the Old Testament to a very dependent position. The teachings of this theory were popularized by A. Jeremias.<sup>2</sup> Though the theory still boasts some eminent supporters there has been a most decided reaction against it.

In the following pages the author has attempted to gather material that will enable the reader to form an opinion upon the question of the extent to which the Old Testament is indebted to Babylonia. Chapter II is intended to show how profoundly Canaan was influenced by the great neighbouring empires long before the history of the Hebrews as a nation begins, and to suggest the environment in which the development of the people took its course. In the following chapter the very difficult, and in many ways obscure, problem as to the

<sup>1</sup> Throughout this book *Delitzsch* always means Friedrich, the Assyriologist, son of Franz Delitzsch, the commentator.

<sup>2</sup> Similarly Jeremias will always stand for *A. Jeremias*.

original elements from which the nation was formed is discussed. It is hoped that in this way a background has been provided that will enable the reader to obtain the right point of view for studying the question as a whole. After chapters the object of which is to give some idea of the religion of Babylonia, and to examine the proposition that the monotheism of the Hebrews owes much to a hypothetical Oriental monotheism of wide prevalence, follow chapters VI-XI, in which the parallels between Hebrew and Babylonian traditions are examined. Finally an attempt is made to give some idea of what is meant by the very elusive hypothesis of Pan-Babylonianism. The book is intended especially to help those whose work is the exposition of the Old Testament, and on that account contains technical matter which may prove comparatively uninteresting to the general reader. The latter might perhaps do well to pass over chapters II and III, using them for subsequent reference. On the other hand the author must ask from some of his readers pardon for explaining things which will be perfectly familiar to them, on the ground that he hopes his book may be found of use by readers who are not theological or Oriental students. A word ought possibly to be said in explanation of the fact that a considerable amount of space has been given to Egypt. This may, in view of the title of the book, seem irrelevant. But it is as impossible to consider the relations between Canaan and Babylonia without introducing Egypt, as it would be to study the relations between

Belgium and Germany without bringing in France. The evidence adduced from Egypt, serves, moreover, to emphasize the truth that, though we find in Babylonia the most important matter for comparison, the problem as to Babylonian influence upon Israel is but a part of the larger problem of Israel's relation to a much wider Oriental civilization.

It may seem that the conclusions reached in the several discussions are so grudging in what they allow to Babylonian influence as to suggest that the writer is prejudiced against the admission of such influence at all. As a matter of fact he began his studies with the general impression that the extent of dependence was greater than a closer scrutiny of the evidence leads him now to suppose. He has endeavoured to avoid the stating of theories as though they were established truths, and has felt at times that he might have obtained high marks for the examination paper on "saving clauses" which Samuel Butler describes as part of the course in the Erewhonian colleges.

One thing at least is certain. If we regard the civilization and culture of the Hebrews we must recognize that they share it with other Oriental nations. We must concede, too, that much of their legislation and some of their religious traditions and customs are derived from a common source to which also the Babylonians are in debt. In some cases, though these are not so numerous as they are often represented to be, the Hebrews may have been influenced directly or indirectly by Babylonia. We have always known,

of course, that the Hebrews were but one branch of the great Semitic family of nations, which includes also the Babylonians and Assyrians, the Phoenicians and Arameans, and the Arabs. But now we realize that in many important respects they were overshadowed by their more highly organized neighbours. The recognition of this truth need not, however, come to us as a disconcerting shock, for in any case the unique glory of the Hebrews and of the Old Testament remains. We can discover nothing in the records of the greater empires comparable with the spiritual religion which we find in the writings of the Hebrew prophets. The only way, still, of accounting for the revelation of God which the Old Testament brings to us is that these men "spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit." From all comparison the Old Testament emerges with an enhanced splendour. And, despite all the attempts which have been made in recent years to disparage the Old Testament, we believe that Robertson Smith's statement still holds good—"a right understanding of the Old Testament is the only way to a right understanding of the Christian faith."<sup>1</sup>

Nor, indeed, if it should be proved that the eternal light which streams from the pages of the Old Testament has been increased by rays reflected from Babylonia or Egypt should we feel in the least disconcerted. We should rejoice rather to know that the knowledge of God was wider spread

<sup>1</sup> Robertson Smith, *The Religion of the Semites*, p. vi.

than we had hitherto supposed. For we believe that God is Light, and that all the light which shines from human souls is but a reflection of the divine light. “ If we really believe in God, who manifests himself in history, we must not prescribe to the Almighty how the events must happen in which we are to find him ; we have only humbly to kiss the prints of his feet, and reverence his government in history.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gunkel, *Israel und Babylonien*, p. 15.

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## CHAPTER II.

### Palestine, Egypt, Babylonia.

THE discoveries of the last fifty years have completely revised our knowledge of the history of Palestine and the surrounding countries. We had been accustomed to think of the land in which the Hebrews settled as a land with little culture, save perhaps in the art of war, and no history. But the excavations of this last half-century in Babylonia, Egypt, and Palestine itself, have given us much historical information, for one particular period in great detail, which enables us to gauge to some extent the external influences upon Palestine, and to reconstruct the conditions of life there, in the centuries before the "Conquest."

The physical conditions of Palestine made it inevitable that political development there should take a course very different from what we find in the great river valleys of Egypt and Babylonia. The country is broken up by ranges of hills and mountains that made it difficult to bring the whole of it into one political entity; consequently its history along the ages was a history of petty kingdoms and principalities, constantly at strife

one with another. Nor, despite the fact that, as contrasted with the desert territories on its Southern and Eastern borders, it might fairly be described as a land "flowing with milk and honey," could it come into comparison with Egypt and Babylonia, whose great rivers made the plains through which they flowed so extraordinarily fertile. The consequence was that in civilization and statecraft the country was considerably less developed than were the great empires which arose on the North-East and South-West.

In another respect, however, the physical conditions which were an obstacle to the development of large and flourishing states in Palestine were more of a boon than a handicap. The numerous small kingdoms within their rocky fastnesses were very difficult to subdue completely : the pages of the Old Testament afford us evidence of the way in which, even when one or two were conquered, others maintained their ground against invading forces. Often as the invader made his march upon the country, and determined as were the efforts to subjugate it, the years during which it was completely tributary to one or other of the great empires were comparatively few in its history.

Concerning the earliest inhabitants of the country we know little or nothing, but probably as early as 4000 B.C. Semitic influence can be traced. Snefru of Egypt, c. 3100, sent forty ships to fetch cedar wood from Syria. The port used was Byblos. Kittel points out<sup>1</sup> that even as early as this

<sup>1</sup> Kittel, GVI.1, p. 52.

expedition Byblos is known by the name Gebal, which is a pure Semitic word. This may be taken as evidence that the port must have been already for some time in the possession of Semites. The earliest military expeditions of Egypt against Palestine that can be definitely dated are described in an inscription<sup>1</sup> found in the tomb of Weni, who acted as commander of the forces under Pepy I, c. 2795. He relates that a numerous expedition was despatched against the land of the "Sand-dwellers," also called "'Amu." The name "Sand-dwellers" presumably indicates a Semitic immigrant people from the Arabian desert country. That the name is derived from their situation at the time of the expedition is hardly likely in view of the fact that Weni records the laying waste and destruction of their land, the overthrow of their fortresses, and the hewing down of their fig trees and vines. They were clearly no longer nomads of the desert. Weni records also a naval expedition against rebels in the land of the "Gazelle-nose," which Kittel interprets to be Carmel and its hinterland, though Gressmann says,<sup>2</sup> "in any case South Palestine is meant." From this inscription it is clear that Palestine was by this time Semiticized, and that Egypt attempted to exercise over it a certain suzerainty.

But the decay of Egypt's power during the succeeding centuries prevented any serious attempt to subjugate Palestine, and it remained for the

<sup>1</sup> Gressmann, TuB.1, pp. 233f.

<sup>2</sup> Gressmann, TuB.1, p. 235 <sup>1</sup>.

rulers of the Twelfth Dynasty to resume the task begun by Pepy I. Amenemhet I, *c. 2212*, seems to have sent troops against Palestine, and, so too, though this cannot be so certainly affirmed, Sesostris I, *c. 2192*. The romance of Sinuhe, so reminiscent of the stories of Joseph in Egypt, which deals with this period, represents conditions in Palestine very similar to those revealed to us five centuries later by the Tell-el-Amarna letters. The country is divided into a number of small kingdoms, with no central controlling power. There is intercourse between these and Egypt, but the latter exercises no real suzerainty over them. In one of these kingdoms an Egyptian exile is safe from the power of the Pharaoh.

Sesostris III, *c. 2099*, made an expedition into Palestine and overthrew Sekmem, which Kittel unhesitatingly identifies<sup>1</sup> with Shechem, though Gressman says<sup>2</sup> it is "otherwise unknown." Compare, however, the name Shakmi, in a letter<sup>3</sup> from Abdi-hiba of Jerusalem, occurring close to the name Betsani (=Bethshan).<sup>4</sup> Though subsequent Pharaohs are pleased to dignify themselves with some such designation as "Ruler of the Asiatics," it is probable that the title was an empty boast. Ere long it was the fate of Egypt herself to fall under the domination of the invading Hyksos, and it was not until the reign of Amosis I, *c. 1580*, who drove them out, that expeditions into Palestine were resumed. These became increasingly more

<sup>1</sup> Kittel, GVII.1, p. 76.      <sup>2</sup> Gressmann, TuB.I, p. 235 <sup>3</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Knudtzon, TA, p. 875.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. p. 42.

formidable, and under Thothmes I, c. 1540, who asserted his suzerainty over all territory up to the Euphrates, Palestine and Syria became tributary to Egypt. Thothmes III, who made many expeditions, in the course of which he fought an important battle at Megiddo, c. 1479, secured these conquests, and received gifts even from the Hittites and the Babylonians. Egyptian garrisons were established in the strong towns of Palestine and Syria, and at this point the power of Egypt over Palestine was at its zenith. The decline was at first gradual, but under Akhenaten, c. 1375-1357, proceeded rapidly towards complete collapse. The decay of Egypt's influence was in a large measure due to the pressure exercised by the Hittites and the Amorites.

We are fortunate in being able to understand the exact condition of affairs in Palestine during Akhenaten's reign, owing to the discovery of the famous tablets at Tell-el-Amarna, on the site of Akhenaten's capital, in 1887. These consist almost entirely of diplomatic correspondence, written in the Babylonian cuneiform script. Most of them are from Egyptian vassals or petty kings in Palestine and Syria to their lord, the Pharaoh; some are from other Asiatic kings; and a few, presumably copies, are letters from the Pharaoh to Asiatic kings and Egyptian vassals. From them we learn that the whole country of Palestine was in a state of turmoil. Abdi-Ashirta, prince of Amurru, that is to say, roughly, the Lebanon district, having made common cause with the

Hittites, was attacking the Phœnician cities, which were loyal to Egypt, while he was all the time pretending to be a loyal subject of Akhenaten. He writes to the Pharaoh<sup>1</sup> protesting that he, the king's servant, "a dog of his house," is diligently guarding Amurru for the king, defending it against hostile powers, and appeals for troops to be sent from Egypt to his assistance. But on the other hand there are several letters from Rib-Addi, the loyal governor of Gebal, pathetically entreating the king to send him help to resist the attacks of this very Abdi-Ashirta, concerning whom he asks,<sup>2</sup> "What is Abdi-Ashirta, the slave, the dog, that he should take the king's land for himself?" It would seem that Akhenaten was either unable to discover from these conflicting statements the true situation, or too indifferent to act firmly, and the Phœnician cities fell one after another into the power of Amurru.

At the other end of Palestine affairs were in a similar condition, the numerous petty princes quarrelling among themselves; some, like Abdi-Ashirta in the North, were busily intriguing against their overlord, while pretending to be his most loyal vassals, and accusing their victims of disloyalty. The counterpart to Rib-Addi in the South is Abdi-hiba of Jerusalem, who seems to have been faithful to Egypt. It is not easy for us, any more than it was for Akhenaten, to distil the truth from these accusations and counter-accusa-

<sup>1</sup> Knudtzon, TA, pp. 346-349.

<sup>2</sup> Knudtzon, TA, pp. 366-369.

tions. Shuwardata complains<sup>1</sup> that Abdi-hiba has taken his city from him, and appeals for Egyptian assistance to oppose him. But the six letters from Abdi-hiba himself make the impression of sincerity.<sup>2</sup> He complains more than once that he has been slandered to the king, and makes the same appeal for troops from Egypt to succour him. His letters are of special interest to us, for he names eight times, as a people who are plundering the king's country, the Habiru, who are possibly closely connected with the Hebrews. The fruitlessness of his entreaties leads him to ask plaintively, "Why dost thou love the Habiru and hate the governors (of thine own cities)?" Another designation of invaders who are frequently mentioned in the tablets is ideographically written GAZ or SA-GAZ,<sup>3</sup> which may be equivalent to the phonetic Habiru. What with internal strife and hostile incursions the Egyptian empire in Palestine crumbled to pieces, while the king made no sufficient effort to deal with the situation.

Affairs in Palestine seem to have remained in this condition until the time of Sety I, c. 1310-1290. In an inscription commemorating his successful campaigns<sup>4</sup> we are told that the Bedouins, probably, that is, the successors to the Habiru of the Tell-el-Amarna letters, were in a state of uproar and revolt, but Sety, "who loved an hour of battle more than a day of joy," completely subdued them. He also defeated the Hittites and recovered

<sup>1</sup> Knudtzon, TA, pp. 846-849. <sup>2</sup> Knudtzon, TA, pp. 857-879.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. pp. 43f.

<sup>4</sup> Gressmann, TuB.1, p. 247.

Syria for his empire. His successors, Rameses II and Merenptah, c. 1225-1215, put down revolts in Palestine. The latter names Israel as a people whom he subdued so thoroughly that their numbers were few and "their seed was no more."<sup>1</sup> It has been argued<sup>2</sup> that such a statement proves the Exodus to have preceded this event by a time sufficient to allow for Israel having become a settled and organized whole in Palestine. Following upon the activities of Merenptah came a period of confusion, during which Egypt's grasp of Palestine was slackened. The recent American excavations at Besan (=Bethshan) seem to demonstrate, however, that the city remained constantly in the possession of Egypt during the years 1313-1167.<sup>3</sup> Rameses III recovered Palestine at the beginning of the twelfth century, but at his death the Philistines seized the territory in the South-West of the country, and though Egypt made one or two subsequent campaigns and was responsible for much intriguing in Palestine she never afterwards held the country in effective possession during the period with which we are particularly concerned.

Let us now turn our eyes beyond the desert land on the West of Palestine towards the alluvial plain lying about the great rivers Tigris and Euphrates,

<sup>1</sup> It has been asserted that this expression refers to the destruction of their seed in the most literal sense, but it is quite clear that "seed" is used here in the sense of "descendants." See further p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> So most recently J. W. Jack in a discussion of the stela on which Merenptah's achievements are recorded.

<sup>3</sup> ZAW, 42, p. 348.

conveniently known as Babylonia. In order to furnish a background for our subsequent investigations we shall find it desirable not merely to note the actual contacts between Babylonia and Palestine but to give a skeleton history of the former country. In the earliest period of which we have any knowledge this territory was divided into a Northern and a Southern district, known respectively as Akkad and Sumer. There is a distinction between the inhabitants of the two districts : while the Akkadians were predominantly Semitic, the Sumerians were a non-Semitic race. It has been suggested that the latter have "Turanian" affinities, but recent investigations go to show that the art of the Sumerians is closely allied to some forms of Indian art, and it is possible that further investigation along this line may throw light on the difficult problem of Sumerian origins. Excavations in the Indus valley have brought to light a script largely identical with the Sumerian.<sup>1</sup> But while there was this general racial distinction between Sumer and Akkad it seems clear that there was a certain intermixture of types in both districts. From the fact that those rulers who, claiming sovereignty over the combined districts, call themselves kings "of Sumer and Akkad," always name them in that order, it may be reasonably deduced that the former was in the earliest period the more important.

The Akkadians may, as Brunnow and Eduard

<sup>1</sup> Griswold thinks that the Indo-Iranians have been influenced by Babylon. Cf. *The Religion of the Rigveda*, pp. 22, 149.

Meyer suppose, have been the original inhabitants of Sumer, who were driven northwards by a conquering race. Or, as is more generally held, the Sumerians may be the earlier inhabitants of the valley, the Akkadians having made their way into the Northern district subsequently. It is customary to assert that the Akkadians came originally from Arabia, but this is pure hypothesis. Certainly if they were later than the Sumerians to enter the country, geography would suggest that they came into Akkad from Amurru.

To the Sumerians is generally ascribed the invention of cuneiform writing. Jastrow has argued,<sup>1</sup> it is true, that this art may be a joint product of the two races : this would certainly account for the fact that the oldest Sumerian records show traces of Semitic influence, but does not on the whole seem to be a very plausible hypothesis. However that may be, it is generally conceded that the culture and religion of Babylonia rest upon a Sumerian foundation.

Into the early history of Sumer and Akkad the records at present give us but fragmentary glimpses. An inscription of Nabonaid, who was contemporary with Cyrus, states that Naramsin, son of Sargon of Agade, reigned 3,200 years before Nabonaid's time. This would give a date for Naramsin of c. 3750 B.C., which is undoubtedly too early. According to the Weld-Blundell prism, recently edited by Langdon, Naramsin was actually grandson, not son, of Sargon.<sup>2</sup> On the basis of calculations made from

<sup>1</sup> Jastrow, HBT, pp. 9f.

<sup>2</sup> OECT, II, p. 17.

this prism Langdon would give the date of Sargon as 2808.<sup>1</sup> In the early days there were, both in Sumer and Akkad, a number of small city states, each of them in constant strife with its neighbours. In these struggles victory passed from one to another so that none was for many successive generations in a position of dominance. A typical passage<sup>2</sup> from the Weld-Blundell text may be quoted to illustrate this :

“The rulership passed to Erech. At Erech Ur-nigin became king. He reigned seven years. Ur-gigir, son of Ur-nigin, ruled six years. Kudda ruled six years. Gimil-ili reigned five years. Ur-Babbar reigned six years. Five kings. Erech was smitten with weapons. The rulership passed to the Gutean hordes.”

Then after a succession of Gutean rulers, to whom are assigned 125 years,

“The hordes of Gutium were smitten by the sword. The rulership passed to Erech.”

The first of these many rulers of small states to establish and consolidate a united kingdom of Sumer and Akkad was the above-mentioned Sargon of Agade. He also defeated the Elamites, the inveterate enemies of Babylonia, and subdued Subartu, the district afterwards known as Assyria. He made claims also to lordship over Amurru. Particularly interesting from our special point of view is an inscription in which Sargon records that

<sup>1</sup> OECT, II, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> OECT, II, pp. 18f.

he has passed over "the sea in the East" and conquered the "Western land to its furthest extremity."<sup>1</sup> According to the most natural interpretation of this latter expression we should be justified in supposing that his activities must have extended to the shore of the Mediterranean Sea, and that he must have exercised some control over the country between that coast and Babylonia.

The turn of Sumer came again, however, and before the rise of the city Babylon to supreme power Erech, Gutium, Erech, Ur, and Isin, in succession held the highest place. The founder of the first dynasty of Babylon was Sumu-abu. This dynasty was of foreign origin. The older writers asserted that it was the result of a wave of immigration from Arabia. It seems much more likely that Clay is right in supposing that the dynasty and the forces that enthroned it came from Amurru. Even some of those who hold generally by the theory that all Semitic populations are to be derived from Arabia concede the point that this particular wave of immigration is rather West-Semitic. The point is of some considerable importance, as will appear later. Sumu-abu and his four immediate successors during a period of about a century gradually extended the authority of Babylon. But it was left to the sixth king of

<sup>1</sup> Gressmann, TuB.I, p. 105. Assmann collects evidence from place-names and archaeological finds in Spain, which in his opinion proves that there was direct Babylonian influence upon Spain at a time perhaps even earlier than that of Sargon, *Janus* I., pp. 1-7.

the dynasty, the famous Hammurabi,<sup>1</sup> to achieve the most brilliant results, and leave an impress which endured for many centuries. He is by almost universal consent, though, in the writer's opinion, on very inadequate grounds, identified with the Amraphel of Gen. 14. It is most unfortunate that there is still uncertainty as to his date.

The Oxford astronomer, Dr. Fotheringham, has recently devoted considerable study to a tablet containing astronomical observations dated in the reign of Ammizaduga, the fourth king in succession to Hammurabi. As a result of the calculations he has made upon this basis he maintains "that only the year 1916-1915 is possible for the sixth year of Ammizaduga."<sup>2</sup> If we accept this we may date the beginning of Hammurabi's reign as *c.* 2068 B.C. This long reign of forty-two years was marked by brilliant success, hard won by persistent effort. After thirty years Hammurabi broke the formidable power of Elam, and then, by subduing Rim-Sin, the ruler of Larsa, united Sumer and Akkad under his own authority. He finally extended his power over Assyria, and far into the territory of the Hittites. But splendid as were his military achievements they pale before the great work he did as administrator of his realm, his crowning glory

<sup>1</sup> We retain this form of the name as being most familiar, though Assyriologists now generally prefer to write it *Hammurapi*. Either form may be defended. See the discussion of the name in Clay, EOA, p. 113<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> OECT, II, i.-iii. JSOR, October, 1924, reports that Condamin, in an article *La date de Hammourabi révisée*, has accepted Kugler's new date for Hammurabi, 1945-1900.

being, of course, the famous code of laws that bears his name.<sup>1</sup> His reign marks the culminating point of Babylon's glory.

The fading of this brilliance was at first very gradual. During the reign of Samsu-iluma, Hammurabi's son, the Kassite tribes from Western Elam, who were afterwards to become the agents of the dynasty's downfall, made their first raids on Babylon's Eastern border. This diversion enabled Rim-Sin, the old antagonist of Hammurabi, once more to raise the standard of revolt in the South. Samsu-iluma acted energetically, and succeeded both in repelling the hostile incursions and in suppressing the internal revolt. But these exertions left his strength somewhat exhausted, and less able to encounter a new foe who appeared. The land in the South, on the shore of the Persian Gulf, was full of marshes, and in general characteristics comparable with the fenlands of the Isle of Ely, where Hereward made his great stand against the Norman conquerors. Taking every advantage of the difficulties such territory presented to the campaigning of Samsu-iluma, Iluma-ilum headed a revolt here, which the king, despite his utmost efforts, failed to subdue; so the kingdom was shorn of its Southern province. In other directions too the boundaries of authority were withdrawn. Samsu-iluma was successful, however, in defeating an Amorite attack. Succeeding rulers were occupied with commerce rather than military enterprise, content to hold, as far as they could, what territory

<sup>1</sup> See C. XI.

they already possessed. They were busy, too, in elaborating the splendour of the national temples and ritual, and particularly interested in developing the cult of divine worship paid to themselves. Samsu-ditana, the last king of the dynasty, which lasted about three centuries, appears to have been crushed by an Hittite invasion.

Meanwhile the offensive thrusts of the Kassites become more and more threatening, and they gradually brought the country under their domination. They succeeded even in reducing the difficult marsh territory in the South, whose kings had until now maintained their independence of Babylon. They thus established themselves at Babylon, ruling over a country once again united. But, since the new conquerors formed but a minority of the inhabitants, the old traditions, social and religious, of the Hammurabi period were not fundamentally changed. The history of the Kassite dynasty, which held its place for nearly six hundred years, is for many periods very obscure. But here again the Tell-el-Amarna letters illumine the gloom. Five of these letters, Nos. 1-5 in Knudtzon, form part of a correspondence between Amenhotep III, of Egypt, and Kadashmanharbe I, the Kassite ruler of Babylon at the beginning of the fourteenth century. The first of these letters, from the Egyptian monarch, enables us to reconstruct an earlier one from the Kassite, which has not survived. Kadashmanharbe had written to Amenhotep complaining that messengers whom he had sent to Egypt had failed to discover one of the Kassite

ruler's sisters, who had been added to the Egyptian harem, and about whose fate he was concerned. Amenhotep's letter in reply says that Kadashmanharbe had not sent messengers who were able to recognize the princess, and complains on his part that in other respects Kadashmanharbe's messengers have deceived their master. The three letters from Kadashmanharbe deal largely with the interchange of gifts between the two courts, and especially with a supply of gold transmitted from Egypt to Babylon. Indeed Kadashmanharbe's persistent application for gold suggests that he may have been descended from a "daughter of the horse-leach." He is offended, too, because the Pharaoh has not returned his compliment by sending an Egyptian princess for the Babylonian harem. The remaining letter of the series, from Amenhotep to Kadashmanharbe, contains an interesting list of gold-decorated furniture which he is sending to Babylon. The art treasures discovered in the tomb of Tutankhamen appear in some cases to have been of Babylonian origin, and if so are evidence of this constant exchange of royal presents between Babylon and Egypt.

Among the letters there are also six from Burra-buriash of Babylon, who was slightly later than Kadashmanharbe; one is addressed probably to Amenhotep III, and the remaining five to Amenhotep IV (=Akhenaten). Two of these letters—Nos. 8 and 9 in Knudtzon—are of especial importance to us. The former makes complaint to the Egyptian king that certain Babylonian envoys had

been killed on their journey through Canaan "thy land." The latter recalls that the Canaanites had earlier sought to induce Kurigalzu, Burraburiash's father and predecessor, to join hands with them against Egypt, which proposal had been rejected with contempt.

Letters Nos. 13 and 14 in Knudtzon contain lists of presents, the former, filling two pages in Knudtzon, dealing probably<sup>1</sup> with presents from Burraburiash to Amenhotep IV, the latter, running to ten pages, invoicing a list of presents from Amenhotep to Burraburiash.

Among the Tell-el-Amarna letters there are found also two—Nos. 15 and 16 in Knudtzon—from Ashur-uballit of Assyria to Amenhotep IV, in which he speaks of sending horses to Egypt, and pleads for a supply of gold "which in thy land is as dust," that he may complete a new palace whose erection he has begun. Another of interest is an earlier one from Amenhotep III to Tarhundaraba of Arzawa, an independent kingdom under the influence of the Hittite rulers, written in the language of Arzawa,<sup>2</sup> dealing with the perennial topics of matrimonial alliances and presents. From these letters as a whole we can reconstruct a tolerably clear picture of the international relations prevailing during the Amarna period. Egypt is evidently the most important of the powers, and Palestine is recognized

<sup>1</sup> See Weber's discussion, Knudtzon, TA, p. 1033.

<sup>2</sup> "An independent kingdom under the influence of the Hittite kings," according to Winckler. See Knudtzon, TA, p. 1075.

to be an Egyptian province. The Canaanites are restless, and inclined to look to Babylon for assistance in throwing off the Egyptian yoke. Babylon is as yet hardly inclined definitely to challenge the Egyptian supremacy, but is constantly demanding large subsidies of gold from Egypt. The impression we receive is that these subsidies were looked upon by Egypt as a means of pacifying the Northern powers. But despite the plentiful supplies of gold which she derived from Nubia she finds the demands insatiable. We have evidence here also of a very considerable traffic through Palestine between Mesopotamia and Egypt. Diplomatic relations are regular and well-organized. We note too the coming into prominence of Assyria and of the Hittite empire.

Further detail has been furnished by the tablets excavated at Boghaz-keui on the site of the old Hittite capital. Kadashmanharbe II, who ruled Babylon about a century later than his namesake of the Amarna period, was concerned because the Hittite king Khattusil had concluded a treaty with Egypt, and wrote, just as a modern Foreign Office might do, to inquire what this treaty might involve.<sup>1</sup> He also added a complaint, almost exactly parallel to that of his namesake, to the effect that certain Babylonian merchants had been murdered while on a journey to Northern Phoenicia. Evidently the suzerainty of Northern Palestine had passed from Egypt to the Hittites. Another of the recovered tablets furnishes Khattusil's reply, in

<sup>1</sup> Cf. King, B, pp. 236f.

which he attempts to quiet Kadashmanharbe's suspicions. He also urges that ruler to join him against a common foe, whom King is doubtless right in identifying as Assyria, which was at this time pursuing an aggressive policy under Shalmaneser I. King comments further on the absence from the Hittite letters to Egypt of the begging for gold which is so constant a refrain in those of the Babylonian monarchs, as evidence that the Hittites relied on their own strong arm.

The rise of Assyria as a great power was fraught with grave consequences for Babylon. At first friendly relationships existed. The Ashur-uballit of the Tell-el-Amarna letters married his daughter to Burraburiash of Babylon. But various conflicts soon disturbed the harmony between the two kingdoms. Eventually Tukulti-ninib I of Assyria completely subdued Babylon, and reduced it to the position of an Assyrian province. The later Kassite rulers of Babylon managed to shake off this strangle-hold for a few decades, but Babylon was subjugated once more, this time by Ashur-dan I. The final collapse of the Kassite dynasty was due to attacks from Elam, the inveterate foe. Nebuchadnezzar I, the fourth king of the dynasty (of Isin) which followed the Kassite dynasty, shook off the Elamites, and had sufficiently reorganized the power of Babylon to repulse an attack by Ashur-resh-ishi of Assyria. Attempting to carry a counter-offensive into Assyria he was, however, driven back after a serious defeat. He calls himself "Conqueror of Amurru," but this claim was

certainly not based upon any permanent hold he obtained over that territory.

Tiglath-Pileser I, who succeeded Ashur-resh-ishi on the throne of Assyria once more brought Babylon to heel, but suffered it to remain nominally independent. He was the first of the great Assyrian conquerors, making numerous successful campaigns, in the course of which he reached the Mediterranean coast in North Phoenicia and overran the Lebanon district. Babylon was for some time kept fully employed by persistent attacks from the Sutu, a Semitic semi-nomad people. Conditions were unsettled until the time of Nabu-mukin-apli, who founded the eighth dynasty towards the beginning of the first millennium B.C., and succeeded in restoring the authority of the central government.

Babylon's difficulties at this time synchronized with a decline on the part of Assyria. The consequent absence of direct influence from Babylon and Assyria furnished a breathing space for Palestine, and so provided an opportunity for the building up of the Hebrew monarchy under David and Solomon. Towards the beginning of the ninth century Ashur-nasir-pal III of Assyria renewed the great campaigns of Tiglath-Pileser I, and made an expedition to the Phoenician coast. The contemporary Babylonian monarch, Nabu-aplu-iddina, was concerned about the growing influence of Assyria upon Babylon's much-prized trade routes, and sent troops to aid Sukhi against Assyria. These were ignominiously defeated, and Babylon was well content to look after her

internal affairs during the succeeding period. Ashur-nasir-pal's son Shalmaneser III defeated a confederation of Syrian and Palestinian kings, among whom was included Ahab of Israel, under the command of Bir-idri (=Benhadad) of Damascus, at Karkar in 854. He made several later expeditions against Syria, one of which was probably the cause of Benhadad's raising the siege of Samaria in 849.<sup>1</sup> In the last of these campaigns, 842, he names "Jehu of the house of Omri" as one from whom he exacted tribute. He also intervened in the affairs of Babylon and was acknowledged as suzerain of that country. His grandson, Ramman-nirari III, also campaigned against Phoenicia and Palestine. The weakening of Assyria's power under subsequent rulers, due to attacks by the Armenians, was a main cause of the expansion of Israel under Jeroboam II.

Tiglath-Pileser IV, in 745, brought Babylon under the direct sway of Assyria, nor did she ever raise her head again until the foundation of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. A great part of Syria, too, he reduced to the status of an Assyrian province, though earlier Assyrian kings had been content to leave it to the rule of local kings as tributary vassals. In 738 he captured Calno,<sup>2</sup> and subdued "Azriyahu of Jau'di," who is probably not to be identified<sup>3</sup> with Azariah of Judah, but is rather the ruler of a country in Northern Syria. Rezon of Damascus and Menahem of Samaria,

<sup>1</sup> See 2 Kings 7<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> See Isa. 10<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> As by Schrader and McCurdy.

among other rulers, made their submission to him after this. Following a campaign against Philistia, in 734, he captured, in 732, Damascus, and a number of towns in Israel, installing an Assyrian governor at Damascus, and exacting heavy tribute from Pekah of Samaria. Ahaz of Judah, who had earlier invoked Tiglath-Pileser's assistance against Pekah and Rezon, was compelled to pay tribute. Tiglath-Pileser's successor, Shalmaneser, invested Samaria, which actually fell, however, in 722, a week or two after his death, so that Sargon, who followed him, claimed the success as his own. Not that Sargon fell short of achievement on his own account ! Immediately upon Shalmaneser's death Merodach-baladan, supported by Elamite allies, had seized the throne of Babylon. It was not until more than a decade had elapsed that Sargon managed to subdue Merodach-baladan and recover the crown of Babylon. In 720 he fought against a Syrian confederation, which was supported by Philistia, Egypt, and probably Judah, obtaining a decisive victory at Raphia, South of Gaza. Five years later he advanced into North Arabia, and in 711 fought a campaign against Ashdod, Philistia, Judah, Edom, and Moab, who had withheld their tribute and sent presents to "Pir'u, king of Musri" to win his support. Whether this is "Pharaoh of Egypt" or "Pir'u," king of the Arabian district known as "Musri" is a point of debate.

Sargon died in 705, and was succeeded by his son Sennacherib. Merodach-baladan had, meanwhile, contrived once more to seat himself upon

the throne of Babylon, and Sennacherib's first task was to conquer that "prop of evil deeds," "that worker of wickedness," as he quaintly describes him. Babylon was captured, but Merodach-baladan escaped and fled. It was at this period, rather than at the time of his earlier conflict with Sargon, that Merodach-baladan sought to enlist help from Hezekiah of Judah, as recorded<sup>1</sup> in 2 Kings 20<sup>12-19</sup>. Babylon, however, continued to give trouble, with the readily granted aid of the Elamites, Merodach-baladan making yet another appearance, if not more than one, on the scene: she was finally crushed in 689, the city being levelled to the ground. Apparently Sennacherib had treated Babylon with great forbearance up to this time, and adopted this terrible policy in sheer despair. Smith thinks that a passage in the annals of Ashurbanipal may be interpreted to mean that Sennacherib was actually engaged in the reconstruction of Babylon when he was assassinated.

Sennacherib's famous campaign in Palestine took place in 701. The coast lands of Phoenicia and Philistia were reduced. Ekron and Judah once again invoked the aid of the "king of Musri," but were defeated at Eltekeh. Sennacherib asserts that he took "forty-six strong walled cities and innumerable smaller towns" from Hezekiah, which is obviously an exaggeration, though 2 Kings 18<sup>13</sup> shows that the disaster was from Judah's point of

<sup>1</sup> See Sidney Smith, *The First Campaign of Sennacherib*, pp. 7-12, for a discussion of the point: also C. J. Gadd, "A Royal Gambler of the Eighth Century B.C." *Holborn Review*, July, 1922.

view overwhelming. It is possible that the account in 2 Kings 19<sup>9-37</sup> may refer to a later expedition of Sennacherib. Sennacherib was succeeded by Esarhaddon, who names Manasseh of Judah as one of the numerous princes whom he compelled to furnish materials for the building of an arsenal. He made two successful expeditions into Egypt. So also did his son, the mighty Ashurbanipal, who came to the throne in 668, another son, Shamash-shum-ukin, receiving at the same time the crown of Babylon, under the suzerainty of his brother. Once again Babylon revolted, as usual with the active support of Elam. Ashurbanipal put down the rebellion and captured Babylon, his brother perishing in the conflagration which consumed his palace. This was in 648.

But, though Ashurbanipal held Babylon in subjection until his death in 626, the might of Assyria had been exhausted by her imperial policy, and by the attacks of the Scythian hordes, and in 625 Nabopolassar was able to establish the Neo-Babylonian dynasty. At first Nabopolassar was, at least nominally, subordinate to Assyria, exercising his authority in Northern Babylonia only. But before 617 he had revolted, and gradually extended his power. The fall of Nineveh, Assyria's capital, was due to the Medes, who were assisted to some extent by Nabopolassar and a contingent of Scythians. The newly discovered Babylonian chronicle, edited by C. J. Gadd,<sup>1</sup> has made it certain that this event took place in 612, and not, as was

<sup>1</sup> Gadd, *The Fall of Nineveh*.

believed hitherto, in 606 B.C. The Assyrian empire maintained for two years a shadowy existence with Harran as its capital, under Ashur-uballit, after which the latter was evicted by the Scythians and Nabopolassar. An attempt made by Ashur-uballit, who was supported by an Egyptian army, to recapture the city proved unsuccessful, and so was extinguished in its ashes the last feeble spark of a once mighty empire.

The new chronicle is specially interesting in that it corrects for us the generally held view of the part played by Egypt in the international politics of this period. In 2 Kings 23<sup>29</sup> we are told that "Pharaoh-necoh, king of Egypt, went up against the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates," and that Josiah, king of Judah, met his death in the conflict at Megiddo, in a vain effort to stay the progress of the Egyptian king. This would be in 608 B.C. It is now clear that the tradition of Josephus that the Babylonians were the enemy at whom Pharaoh-necoh's threat was aimed is the true one, and that Egypt was supporting Assyria, until Assyria ceased to exist as a fighting power, hoping to use her as a bulwark against the Scythian forces.

Nabopolassar was by no means disposed to allow Syria and Palestine to fall into the hands of Egypt, and accordingly despatched an army, under the command of Nebuchadnezzar, the crown prince, to encounter Pharaoh-necoh. The hostile forces met at Carchemish, in 605, and the battle resulted in an overwhelming defeat of the Egyptians, who were

driven back through Palestine into Egypt. The news of Nabopolassar's death caused Nebuchadnezzar to break off from the pursuit, that he might return to Babylon for the ceremonies which would install him on the throne. Most of the petty kingdoms of Syria and Palestine quickly transferred their allegiance to Babylon, including Judah. But, despite the warnings of Jeremiah, Jehoiakim revolted from Babylon. He died before the punishment fell; but his son, Jehoiachin, had reigned only three months when Jerusalem was taken by Nebuchadnezzar in 596, the king and a large part of the population being removed to Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar filled the throne by the appointment of Zedekiah, Jehoiachin's uncle, as vassal king. But when Egypt, a few years later, made a last effort to re-establish her authority in Palestine and Syria, Judah was among the states that supported her, once more against the emphatic protests of Jeremiah. Again Nebuchadnezzar besieged the city, and, after repulsing an Egyptian force that had been sent to its relief, in 586 captured it once again, and removed into exile most of the inhabitants who had remained after the earlier deportation.

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## CHAPTER III.

### Israel's Ancestors.

SUCH history, in the modern sense of the word, as the Old Testament affords us for the generations preceding Samuel is only fragmentary. The interpretation of the patriarchal legends has long been a keenly controverted question. According to the view most widely held by scholars the names of the patriarchs stand really not for historical persons, but for clans and tribes. Nor is it easy to deny that in this view there is at least an element of truth. It is highly probable, for example, that in some of the matrimonial alliances recorded of the patriarchs we have a symbolic embodiment of the relations between clans. Marriage will signify the amalgamation of two clans. Brotherhood may represent a close connection stopping short of amalgamation. This theory has been elaborately discussed by Guthe,<sup>1</sup> who has formulated canons for its application to the stories. But, whatever element of truth this theory may contain, any attempt to construe the whole of the patriarchal stories, even to the details, according to such canons inevitably breaks down.

<sup>1</sup> Guthe, *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, pp. 1-6.

Another view that has sometimes been put forward is that the patriarchs are "faded deities." Perhaps the most important supporter of this hypothesis is Eduard Meyer.<sup>1</sup> The idea of the theory is that the names of certain ancient deities were in the course of time transferred to the clans or tribes among whom they were worshipped. The most plausible illustration produced for this thesis is the case of Gad, the name certainly of a god of "Fortune," and also of a tribe. But there is very little in the stories themselves that can be advanced to justify the theory, and attempts to work it out in detail involve us in difficulties greater even than those which beset the simple "tribe-theory." Eerdmans has criticized it<sup>2</sup> in a very convincing manner. The same kind of hypothesis has been put forward with reference to the Homeric heroes, and has been emphatically rejected by Leaf, who writes: "Let us begin with one dogma which still, I fear, passes among the orthodox, at least in Germany, for an article of faith—the dogma that the heroes of the Epos are 'faded,' or let us say humanized, gods. The belief is a direct descendant of the Solar Myth. It is a pure assumption. No evidence of an undoubted god brought down by poetry to the human level has ever, so far as I know, been adduced: it is all a mere matter of hypothesis. And it directly contradicts all that we know of popular psychology, the general tendency of the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Die Israeliten und ihre Nachbarstämme*, pp. 249-253.

<sup>2</sup> Eerdmans. *Alttestamentliche Studien*, II., pp. 5-14.

mythopœic faculty of mankind. Men are constantly, in all ages and in all parts of the world, raising famous men to, or towards, godhead, generally after their death, sometimes even in their life. But they never reverse the process. Gods may come down and walk among men ; but not in order that they may become men and lose their godhead—rather that they may the more effectively prove their divinity by immortality, invulnerability, or miracle.”<sup>1</sup> On the other hand Farnell says : “The pendulum is always swinging round : in a recent work (*Homer and History*, p. 25) Dr. Leaf dogmatizes : ‘The fact is that the human race does not make men out of gods’ : I do not think he has a right to this pronouncement.”<sup>2</sup> It is interesting to note in this connection that the names of Tammuz and Gilgamesh appear in a list of post-diluvian kings.<sup>3</sup>

Upon somewhat similar lines runs the interpretation of the stories as astral myths, in which Abraham, for example, becomes a manifestation of the moon-god. It is not impossible to find so-called “moon-motifs” in the Abraham traditions. Some of them are at first sight rather plausible. The number 318 in Gen. 14<sup>14</sup> has been explained as the number of days in the lunar year upon which the moon is visible. These astral mythological motifs will be found set forth in detail in the

<sup>1</sup> Leaf, *Homer and History*, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Farnell, *Greek Hero Cults and Ideals of Immortality*, p. 20 (for this and the preceding reference the author is indebted to Dr. Peake).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. OECT, II, p. 12.

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second volume of *The Old Testament in the Light of the Ancient East*, by A. Jeremias. Many of them are in the highest degree precarious, and in our opinion such of them as may be reckoned to have any substance are decorative rather than significant. The general theory of which this forms a subsidiary part will be more fully discussed in chapter XII.

For ourselves we believe that Abraham was an historic person, and that the story of the migration from Ur of the Chaldees by way of Harran to Canaan rests upon a sound tradition. It has been remarked that youthful nations, like youthful men, have more tenacious memories than those which have grown old ; and we think we may trust this tradition of the Hebrews and be tolerably certain that Israel traced its remotest origin to a migration from Babylonia. Exactly when this migration may have taken place it is impossible to say. Those who accept the superficially attractive, but far from demonstrable, theory that Amraphel (Gen. 14) is to be identified with the great Hammurabi, often proceed to the deduction that Abraham must have been a contemporary of Hammurabi ; they would consequently date the Abraham migration in the first century of the second millennium B.C. This, however, is an exceedingly hazardous speculation, for, whatever old historic traditions may be enshrined in Gen. 14, the chapter can certainly not bear the weight of such a synchronism. It may, indeed, be quite true that in the names of the kings we have accurate reminiscence, whether it was handed down orally

or in some written form. But unfortunately it is absolutely impossible to synchronize all the names that are concerned. It is customary to identify Arioch, king of Ellasar, with Eriaku (=Warad Sin), king of Larsa, though the equation of Ellasar with Larsa is precarious ; but, unhappily, according to the most recent datings Eriaku and Hammurabi were not themselves contemporary kings. Recently Böhl<sup>1</sup> has identified Tidal, king of nations, with a Hittite king Tud'alia, whom he dates c. 1650 : this identification has received support from Kittel,<sup>2</sup> S. A. Cook,<sup>3</sup> and Jirku.<sup>4</sup> All of which goes to show that it is unwise to seek in the present state of our knowledge to deduce from Gen. 14 a date for the movement of Abraham from Mesopotamia. We must be content to say very generally that the oldest element of the Hebrew race came into Canaan probably between 2000 and 1650 B.C.

Let us now turn to consider the problem which arises out of the mention in the Tell-el-Amarna letters of the Habiru. Are they in any sense to be identified with the Hebrews ? To this question diverse answers are given. It is agreed that there is no phonetic difficulty in equating the names. The identification of the peoples, originally proposed by Conder and Zimmern, is supported by Knudtzon, Winckler, Bezold, Eduard Meyer, Guthe, Nöldeke, Burney, Kittel, and Böhl, among others, and is probably, though not certainly, correct. It should be carefully noted, however, that the identification

<sup>1</sup> ZAW, 42, p. 148.

<sup>2</sup> Kittel, GVI, I, p. 478<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Cambridge Ancient History, I.

<sup>4</sup> Jirku, AK, p. 58.

is construed to mean rather that the Hebrews are a branch of the Habiru, than that all the Habiru are Hebrews. The Habiru appear in the Tell-el-Amarna letters only in the communications of Abdi-hiba<sup>1</sup> of Jerusalem, where they are named seven, or it may be eight, times. The general character of the Habiru may be easily discovered from these references, which we give in the subjoined table :

No. of letter.

286. 56.	"The Habiru plunder all the king's lands."
286. 17-19.	"I say to my lord the king, Why dost thou love the Habiru and hate the regents?"
287. 30-31.	"the sons of Labaja, who have given the king's land to the Habiru."
288. 38.	"The Habiru take the king's towns."
288. 44.	? ? ?
289. 21-24.	"Labaja and the land of Shakmu (=Shechem) have given (all) to the Habiru."
290. 12-13.	"The land of the king is fallen away to the Habiru."
290. 20-24.	"Send troops * * * or the land of the king is fallen away to the Habiru."

It seems clear that the Habiru were thrusting their way into South Palestine, and that, in some cases with the assistance of the local peoples and their governors, they were establishing themselves in towns which were thus detached from the suzerainty

<sup>1</sup> Burney, *Israel's Settlement in Canaan*, p. 66<sup>5</sup>, on the ground that the name is Hittite—Mitannian prefers to write the name ARAD-hiba, thinking it wrong to give the Sumerian ideogram which begins it a Semitic equivalent. Weber (Knudtzon, TA, p. 1334), however, says, "In my opinion Gustav is right when he says that to read ARAD-hiba assumes that the Mitannian language was still spoken in Palestine," an assumption which he rejects.

of Egypt. They were evidently a military people, for according to Langdon<sup>1</sup> Habiru "were imported (into Babylon) in the time of Hammurabi as mercenary soldiers."

There are in the Tell-el-Amarna letters also many references to a people described ideographically as the SA.GAZ, who are playing in the Northern districts of Palestine the same part that the Habiru are playing round about Jerusalem. The suggestion has been advanced that the two names really describe the same people. Knudtzon<sup>2</sup> thinks they were closely connected, but not identical. Weber<sup>3</sup> takes the view that Habiru is a phonetic reading of SA.GAZ, and that we must postulate identity. This is probable, in view of the fact that Winckler and Böhl have demonstrated from the Boghaz-keui documents the equation *ilani Habiru =ilani SA.GAZ*. It seems, however, to be probable that SA.GAZ is sometimes to be understood as *habbatum* =robbers, plunderers.<sup>4</sup> Habiru has also been interpreted to mean "confederates," from the common Semitic root *hbr*. However this may be decided, that the names are *originally* proper names appears to be demonstrated by the fact that the determinative *KI*, which is used after the names of countries, appears once after *Habiru* and probably twice after *SA.GAZ*. The discovery of the existence of a god Habiru,<sup>5</sup> who may well

<sup>1</sup> *Cambridge Ancient History*, I, p. 420.

<sup>2</sup> Knudtzon, TA, pp. 51f.

<sup>3</sup> Knudtzon, TA, p. 1336.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. the discussions in Burney, *Israel's Settlement in Palestine*, pp. 70ff., and Knudtzon, TA, pp. 50f.

<sup>5</sup> Gustavs, ZAW, 40, pp. 313f.

have been the national deity, points in the same direction. We shall then explain the use of the name *SA.GAZ* as an adjective on analogy with our use of the names *Goths* and *Vandals*. The most likely solution of our problem is that we are to find in the Habiru of the Tell-el-Amarna letters one element of the people whom we know as the Hebrews. This must be qualified by a recognition of the truth that the Habiru embraced more than the Hebrews; this hypothesis finds support in the fact that Gen. 10 represents Heber as father of other Semitic stems beside the Hebrews. That the people whom we call the Israelites included an element of Hebrews who were distinct from other elements seems clear, as Weinheimer has argued, from 1 Sam. 13<sup>6f.</sup>, 14<sup>21</sup>. The Habiru are generally supposed to be of Aramean stock. Clay<sup>1</sup> thinks that the occurrence of *ilani Habiru* in Hittite documents suggests rather that the Habiru are of Hittite origin: Kittel<sup>2</sup> would meet this contention by the supposition that *Habiru* there is appellative.<sup>3</sup>

The early narratives of the Old Testament bring Israel into relation also with Egypt. Not to speak of the stories concerning Moses and the Exodus, Abraham, Joseph, and Jacob, are all represented as sojourning in that country. The historical worth of these stories has been very variously

<sup>1</sup> Clay, *Personal Names of Cassite Rulers*, pp. 42f.

<sup>2</sup> Kittel, GVI, I, p. 464<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> It should perhaps be stated that the identification of the Habiru with the Hebrews is rejected by a number of scholars, e.g., Condamin, *Dictionnaire Apologétique de la Foi Catholique* p. 353, and Mercer, JSOR, III, p. 46.

estimated, but of one thing at least we may be confident. There can be no reasonable doubt that some part of the Hebrew nation endured a period of oppression in Egypt. We cannot believe that the national pride would ever have accepted an invented tradition that its ancestors long ago had been slaves in a foreign country. The "house of bondage," so often referred to, stands for a very real experience. We might also go further, and urge that among the several strains of which the Hebrew people is composed that which had come from Egypt must have been dominant, or the memory of the oppression would not have been suffered to appear so prominently in the records. Another truth may be regarded as equally well established: the deliverance of the people from the "house of bondage," the Exodus, must have been accompanied by some very striking event that caused it to be recounted through the generations as the outstanding example of Yahweh's intervention on behalf of His people.

The most probable period for the entrance of Hebrews into Egypt is that of the Hyksos domination,<sup>1</sup> though the tradition as to Abraham's sojourn there may mean that there had been a still earlier immigration: this, however, would seem to have been of comparatively short duration. After the fall of Egypt's twelfth dynasty the country fell into a state of helpless confusion, and the Asiatic people known as the Hyksos made themselves masters of the land, about 1780 B.C. They were

<sup>1</sup> Roughly 1800-1600 B.C.

not completely expelled until over two centuries later. It is interesting to note that one of the Hyksos rulers bears the name *Ya'qob-har*, which seems to contain the element *Jacob*.<sup>1</sup> The favourable reception of the Hebrews which we find in the Joseph-Jacob traditions would be easily understood if their movement into Egypt occurred during a period when the rulers of the country were the Hyksos, a race in all probability more or less akin to the Hebrews themselves.

The date of the Exodus is most generally assigned to the reign of Merenptah, who was on the throne from c. 1225-1215 B.C. The evidence that is adduced in support of this position Peet, however, characterizes<sup>2</sup> as "so flimsy that it is difficult to see how it can ever have arisen." He himself rather inclines to the view that the Exodus is to be connected with the Habiru invasion of Palestine in the Amarna period, though he is compelled to admit that the positive evidence for that theory is almost equally exiguous. Eerdmans has brought forward<sup>3</sup> another theory: he thinks that while an immigration of "Hebrews" into Egypt took place before the reign of Thothmes III, the immigration of the "Israelites" is to be dated c. 1210, and the Exodus c. 1130. The difficulties in the way of this late dating appear, however, to be almost insuperable.

Scholars usually determine the dates of these events according to their views of (1) the general

<sup>1</sup> Albright, JPOS, I, p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> Peet, *Egypt and the Old Testament*, p. 108.

<sup>3</sup> Eerdmans, *Alttestamentliche Studien*, II, p. 74.

conditions in Egypt at certain periods as favourable or unfavourable to an immigration or an exodus, and (2) the correct interpretation of certain references which seem to imply that at particular dates Hebrews or Israelites are present in Palestine or Egypt. Some of the latter references may be worth our attention. An inscription at Karnak contains a list of Southern Syrian towns whose peoples were defeated by Thothmes III *c.* 1479 at Megiddo. Among them is named Jacob-el, and, less certainly, Joseph-el. Does this mean that Jacob and Joseph clans are resident there at this time? Again, about the middle of the fourteenth century lists of North Syrian lands found in inscriptions of Sety I and Rameses II mention 'Asaru—the vowels, of course, are conjectured—and in a position which might suggest that the territory is situated in that part of Canaan which during the period of the Judges was occupied by the tribe of Asher. From this it has been argued by Müller and Hommel that from *c.* 1350 onwards a clan whose remnants are to be found in the Israelite tribe of Asher must have been settled in that locality. Burney also accepts that inference, and Kittel is inclined<sup>1</sup> to the same view. But identity of consonants by no means excludes diversity of names, and moreover the arguments for identity of geographical situation can hardly be described as cogent. It may be wiser, then, with scholars like Eerdmans and Peet, to suspend judgment on the question. More important is the famous reference, which we have

<sup>1</sup> Kittel, GVI, I, p. 425<sup>1</sup>.

already mentioned, in the Merenptah stela,<sup>1</sup> c. 1220, which in recording that monarch's triumphs in Palestine says :

“ Led captive is Askelon, seized is Gezer,  
destroyed is Yenoam :

Israel—its people are few, its seed no longer exists.”

As has been observed, this last clause has been interpreted, by Petrie and others, to mean that Israel's fields and orchards had been laid waste ; so also Eerdmans,<sup>2</sup> who renders “ seed ” by “ Feldfrucht,” and uses the passage to buttress his contention that Israel was a people of peasants rather than of nomads. It most certainly, however, in view of the parallelism, and of the fact that the same expression is used by Rameses III of the sea-peoples who invaded Egypt,<sup>3</sup> must mean that the male population was almost exterminated. A point of interest to which Eerdmans has directed attention is that while the determinative sign for “ land ” is attached to Askelon, Gezer, and other towns, it does not appear with Israel. This suggests that Israel may have been an immigrant people not so closely attached by tradition to one definite locality in Palestine.

It is possible that we should connect the 'Aperu or 'Aperiū who are mentioned in several Egyptian documents with the Hebrews. They are first named in a folk-story of the twentieth Dynasty,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Gressmann, TuB, I, p. 195.

<sup>2</sup> Eerdmans, *op. cit.*, II, p. 55.      <sup>3</sup> See Burney, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

<sup>4</sup> See Peet, *Egypt and the Old Testament*, p. 123.

where they play a part—probably as an element in the Egyptian army—in the siege of Joppa under Thothmes III. In papyri of Rameses II and Rameses III they are mentioned as corvée labourers and slaves. Their last appearance—subsequent to the time of the Exodus, be it noted—is in the reign of Rameses IV, once again in the capacity of soldiers. Peet<sup>1</sup> admits that the philological equation between the names 'Aperu and Hebrew, though rather abnormal, is possible, but deems it "safer to refuse to accept on present evidence the identity of the two peoples." Kittel identifies<sup>2</sup> the 'Aperu with the Habiru: "they are not the Israelites, but the Israelites belong to them." Burney takes practically the same position, and Eerdmans asserts<sup>3</sup> that they are certainly Hebrews—whom he carefully distinguishes, we must remember, from Israelites, though he thinks many of them may have joined with the Israelites in the Exodus.

On the whole the dating of the Exodus in the reign of Merenptah, though the positive evidence that can be adduced for it seems very weak, remains the most probable hypothesis. Eerdmans's date allows too little time for the subsequent development of Hebrew history. The theory that the Exodus should be connected with the influx of the Habiru into Palestine during the Amarna period accords better, it is true, with the Biblical system of chronology, and would account for those notices which seem to imply the presence of the Hebrews

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 125.

<sup>2</sup> Kittel, GVI, I, p. 478<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 74.

or of Israel in Palestine between that epoch and the reign of Merenptah. But the Biblical chronology is obviously artificial ; and there is every reason to believe that those Israelites who sojourned in Egypt were not the whole stock of the people, so no difficulty need be caused by the fact that a people called Israel might be resident in Palestine contemporaneously.

We find, then, that the people who were welded into a kingdom under David may be traced back to several distinct origins. Primarily there is an element connected with Abraham, who immigrated into Palestine from Ur and Harran in the early part of the second millennium B.C. A second element is to be found among the Habiru of the Amarna period. Some part of these sojourned in Egypt for many years, not necessarily as a single community. Of these sojourners many returned to Palestine at the time of the Exodus, making a stay at Midian on their route, and attaching to themselves some of the people among whom they tarried. This diversity of origins explains to some extent the readiness with which the kingdom divided.

It will be obvious from all this that there are *a priori* grounds for postulating Babylonian, Egyptian, Canaanite, and Midianite influences upon Israel's religion and institutions. The Pan-Egyptian scholars, who trace all civilization to an origin in Egypt, have made great claims for the influence of that country upon Israel. Excavations in Palestine certainly show traces of the influence of Egyptian art on Canaan, but positive evidence of more

important influences seems to be comparatively meagre. On the other hand the Pan-Babylonian scholars point to the evidence of the immigration from Ur and Harran, and to the probable residence in Palestine, during centuries before the time of Moses, of at least part of the stock from which Israel comes. According to their view, throughout this time Palestine was soaked in Babylonian influence, or, to use their own words, "Canaan was a mere province of Babylonian culture." They find everywhere parallels between Hebrew and Babylonian culture and religion : the more extreme among them will find in Babylonia the source of everything in the Old Testament, and not a little in the New. Some of the more important parallels adduced it is the main purpose of this book to discuss, but we will conclude this chapter by summing up the evidence that Babylonian influence was dominant in Palestine during many centuries of the pre-Mosaic period, so that directly, and through the Canaanites indirectly, a considerable effect may have been produced by it upon Israel.

Apart from the evidences of direct political and military contact which we have reviewed, there is the even more powerful influence of trade to be taken into account. The examples previously quoted of Babylonian traders passing through the country make it clear that, even at times when the political power of Babylon was by no means paramount in Palestine, the merchant still journeyed to and fro. It is asserted, with undoubted truth, that in many respects the influence of commerce

is greater than that of politics or war, and that highways of traffic may very well be highways of ideas. There seems to be no doubt that the Hebrews were dependent upon Babylonian culture for much in their system of weights and measures. Commerce upon an extensive scale would naturally involve the common use of units of this kind. Too much may easily be made of this point, for English units of measurement are known and employed in many places that are little affected by English ideas of religion. Legal customs may penetrate by the same avenue. Yet experience teaches us that while the trader may be in a certain sense a pioneer of civilization he need not be at the same time a missionary of religion. Nations will adopt elements of civilization much more readily than tenets of religion. The excavations in Palestine go to show that while the art of Canaan was undoubtedly influenced by that of Babylonia the traces of this influence become comparatively faint from the time of the Hebrew occupation.<sup>1</sup>

Very great emphasis has been laid upon the fact that during the Amarna period the Babylonian cuneiform script and language were employed for diplomatic correspondence in Palestine, Egypt, and contiguous countries. Nor is this evidence unique, for cuneiform inscriptions have been found also in the excavations at Tell-el-Hesy and Taanach. Further, among the Amarna letters are found some which are obviously the copies and exercises of students of "Babylonian." No. 348 in Knudtzon's

<sup>1</sup> See Driver, *Modern Research as Illustrating the Bible*, p. 86.

collection is particularly interesting as being apparently an attempt to make a connection between the order of the West-Semitic alphabet and that of the signs in the older Babylonian lists. Nos. 356-358 are cases in which the Babylonian myths of Adapa and the South Wind, and of Erishkigal and Nergal, have served as copies. Here, then, it is urged, we have direct evidence that Babylonian mythology was extant in written form in Egypt, and presumably, therefore, not unknown in Palestine. This, again, is a fact upon which too much weight of argument may easily be placed. The evidence of the letters themselves goes to show that knowledge of the Babylonian method of writing was not more likely to be widespread than, say, the knowledge of French in all the countries which so long used it as the language of diplomacy. At any rate the Hebrews and the surrounding peoples of Canaan developed, independently of Babylonia, their own system of writing, which, because it was alphabetic, was much more scientific than the Babylonian sign apparatus. So while we shall readily concede that Palestine for many centuries before the time of Moses was considerably influenced by Babylonian culture we are entitled to ask that in the matter of religion and ethics definite evidence should be produced by a careful comparison of the religious documents, before we can accept the sweeping assertions of those who would make the Hebrew religion a mere province of Babylonian religion.

## CHAPTER IV.

### Some Features of Babylonian Religion.

#### § I. THE DEITIES.

THE amount of material now available for the reconstruction of the religion of Babylonia is in some respects embarrassingly great. On the other hand difficulties as to the dating of documents, and even more the difficulties arising out of the fact that the contents of documents are often much older than the records in which they are preserved, introduce a considerable element of uncertainty. The problems occasioned by the simultaneous practice of different cults, and by the readiness of deities to interchange places and attributes, present another complication. It is necessary to remember, also, that in the very nature of the case any attempt to reconstruct a religion from its surviving literary records will tend to reflect rather the official, priestly, type of the religion than the popular conceptions. But although many details are as yet uncertain it is possible to gain a general view of the religion which is substantially true.

There is little doubt that in the case of Babylonia,

as elsewhere, the early stages of the religion were crudely animistic. Behind all the forces and powers of nature spirits lurked. These early stages had, however, been left behind before the earliest times to which our history reaches back. Attention had been focussed on certain of the major powers of nature, such as the sun, the moon, the storm, water, who were personified as the great gods. For each of the petty city states one of these gods was the chief or protecting deity, though why a particular deity was associated primarily with a particular city it is often impossible to discover. Minor deities were associated with the chief deity in a subordinate position. Sometimes the principal deity absorbed minor deities, whose special functions were then transferred to him. The great deity of one city would figure sometimes as a minor deity in another pantheon. Sometimes different chief deities, called by distinct names, really represented the same natural power: in such cases a certain amount of assimilation was inevitable. Each of the principal cities had thus its own pantheon, with one great god in a monarchic position. Ur, for example, was the chief centre of the worship of Sin, the most famous of the lunar deities; while at Eridu, near the Persian Gulf, though recent exploration has led to the conclusion that the city was not, as has hitherto been usually supposed, actually on it, the principal deity worshipped was Ea, the god of the water-deeps. In this latter case the reason for association between the god and his city is obvious.

The whole civilization was profoundly religious in character. For these people religion was not something added to life, and associated primarily with special days and seasons. Everything in life had a religious background or origin ; every act was performed in a religious atmosphere. The king looked upon himself as being in no formal sense king "by the grace of God." He had been chosen for his position by the god, and regarded himself as the representative of the god. From the gods came all knowledge of arts and crafts ; the gods were the sources of all culture and civilization.

Among the chief deities were some of much more than local repute. Notable in this respect was Enlil of Nippur, with his consort Ninlil. Because of the great sanctity of Nippur one of the ambitions of all the kings who sought to build up a kingdom extending beyond the borders of their own little state was to obtain control over this city. Jastrow aptly compares<sup>1</sup> Nippur in this respect with the holy city Benares, or the sacred city of mediæval Christendom, Rome. So too Mohammedan powers have striven for the control of Mecca. In the precincts of Enlil's great shrine at Nippur the patron deities of other cities, such as Sin of Ur, had their "chapels." This is all the more remarkable in that, so far as our present knowledge goes, Nippur was never prominent as a political force, though, as Jastrow says<sup>2</sup>, it may conceivably have been so at a period "still beyond our ken." Yet

<sup>1</sup> Jastrow, *Belief*, p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Jastrow, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

Enlil seems not to have been originally the god of Nippur. Ninib, a solar deity, the "hero of the gods," god of war and of the chase, was worshipped there, and associated in a very intimate degree with the city. Clay has made out a plausible case<sup>1</sup> for believing that Ninib, whose name he reads as "En-Mashtu," was of Amorite origin. If his theory be correct, the non-Sumerian deity Ninib must have been deposed from his pre-eminence at Nippur by the Sumerian Enlil. The name of the latter, which was pronounced "Ellil," is Sumerian, and means "lord of the storm." He is sometimes called "mountain," and his temple was known as "E-kur," which means "mountain house." His importance, incidentally, is shown by the fact that this name came later to be used as a common noun for "temple." Though, like the date of the Sumerian immigration, the original status of Enlil, whom the Sumerians brought with them, is obscure, it would seem to be a reasonable inference from these names that he was originally a mountain deity, possibly from the mountainous country of Elam. As the moon-god is at times described as "Enlil's strong calf" Jeremias has deduced<sup>2</sup> that he himself was originally a lunar deity. It is interesting to note that, as in the case of Yahweh, there seem to meet in Enlil the two streams of suggestion which would make him both mountain

<sup>1</sup> Clay, *Amurru*, pp. 121f. In the appendix on the name Ninib, pp. 195-201, he adopts another explanation, which, however, still "identifies the deity with the West." By "identifies," he means, of course, "connects."

<sup>2</sup> Jeremias, *Handbuch*, p. 237.

and moon god. When he took the place of Ninib at Nippur the change was facilitated by regarding Ninib as the son of Enlil. He has two aspects, the one threatening, as god of the destructive storm, the other kindly and generous, as providing the winter rains upon which the plain was dependent for its fertility. Here, too, we find a likeness to the character of Yahweh.

There is a noticeable tendency, due probably to attempts on the part of priests belonging to different centres to bring some sort of order and system into the chaos of divinities, to discriminate between three great deities, constituting a triad, and those of inferior rank. The members of the triad differ in different places and at different times. The earliest of such triads seems to be composed of Anu, Enlil, and Ea. Anu, who is particularly associated with Uruk, is regarded as the father of Enlil. In the myths he appears as father and king of the gods, and evidently is a personification of the Sky. So the members of the ancient triad Anu, Enlil, Ea, corresponded respectively to the heavens above the earth, the earth, and the waters beneath the earth. The character of Anu is not made so clear as are the characters of later deities. He seems to have been retained as a senior in the place of honour, while more active worship was paid to the other great gods. His feminine counterpart was Antum.

Ea, whose feminine counterpart was Damkina, is looked upon as especially the god of wisdom. He is a sage counsellor among the gods, and a

patron of healing for men. He frequently figures as man's friend among the gods.

Sin, the moon-god, was, as we have already seen, associated especially with Ur and Harran. In the Sumerian pantheon Sin, as contrasted with the sun, was the god of life. His praises were sung in hymns of great beauty and fervour. One of his recognized functions was the giving of oracles, and he was prominently connected also with the healing art. He might on the other hand produce sickness in mortals.

Shamash, a solar deity, had his chief cult centres in Sippar, North Babylonia, and Larsa, South Babylonia. In the Sumerian pantheon the sun-god appears primarily to have been regarded as destructive with his burning rays, and as a god of the underworld and death. But as god of light he was also god of wisdom. The Babylonians recognized the part played by the sun in producing the fruits of the earth, and ascribed praise for this to Shamash. Pre-eminently Shamash was the god of law and right. A very striking proof of this is afforded by the fact that Hammurabi represents himself as receiving from the hands of Shamash his famous code of laws.<sup>1</sup> It is not improbable that in the shrine of Shamash at Sippar, the city from which the Hammurabi dynasty sprung, the original of the code was deposited. As the god specially concerned with justice Shamash was the protecting deity for the suffering and wronged. This is beautifully brought out in the famous

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 253.

hymn from which Jastrow quotes the following extract<sup>1</sup>:

" Who plans evil—his horn thou dost destroy,  
 Who in fixing boundaries annuls rights,  
 The unjust judge thou restrainest with force.  
 Who accepts a bribe, who does not judge justly—on him  
 thou imposest sin.  
 But he who does not accept a bribe, who has a care for  
 the oppressed,  
 To him Shamash is gracious, his life he prolongs.  
 The judge who renders a just decision  
 Shall end in a palace, the place of princes shall be his  
 dwelling.

\* \* \* \* \*

The seed of those who act unjustly shall not flourish.  
 What their mouth declares in thy presence thou wilt  
 annul.  
 Thou knowest their transgressions ; the declaration of the  
 wicked thou dost cast aside.  
 Everyone, whoever he may be, is thy care.  
 Thou directest their judgments, the imprisoned dost thou  
 liberate.  
 Thou hearest, O Shamash, petition, prayer, appeal,  
 Humility, prostration, petitioning, and reverence.  
 With loud voice the unfortunate one cries to thee.  
 The weak, the exhausted, the oppressed, the lowly,  
 Mother, wife, maid, appeal to thee.  
 The one removed from his family, the one dwelling afar  
 from his city,  
 The peasant when he gathers in his harvest appeals to  
 thee."

Marduk, who at the time when Babylon under the First Dynasty rose to a position of unexampled splendour was the patron god of the state, figures very prominently in the records. He is closely

<sup>1</sup> HDB, Extra Vol., pp. 565f.

associated with Ea, being represented as the son of that deity. To him were transferred many of Ea's functions. At the end of the epic *enuma elish*<sup>1</sup> Ea is made to say to Marduk, "Let thy name be as mine, 'Ea'": that is to say, in the Babylonian pantheon Marduk takes the place of Ea as the wise counsellor among the gods. Earlier, in Eridu, Marduk had figured as the son of Ea, and it is not improbable that the Marduk cult was imported from that city to Babylon, and afterward elaborated. It is significant in this connection that the name of Marduk's great shrine in Babylon, Esagila, came also from Eridu. In the incantation formulæ a dialogue between Ea and Marduk frequently occurs, in which Marduk appeals on behalf of a victim of magical practices to his father Ea, and Ea answers:

" My son ! What is there unknown to thee ?  
What more can I say to thee ? "

So also in *enuma elish* Ea and Marduk replace the Enlil and Ninurta of the older Sumerian myth upon which the Babylonian epic is based. In this way epithets belonging originally to Enlil are transferred to Marduk. Marduk absorbs, too, in the Hammurabi period, the functions of Nabu, the god of the neighbouring town of Borsippa. This tendency to transfer the authority and power of the other gods to Marduk is seen in its most definite form in the famous text<sup>2</sup> which identifies many other deities with Marduk, each being equated with Marduk in some one of his special

<sup>1</sup> Cf. c. VI.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. p. 136.

functions. One of the characteristics of Marduk upon which special emphasis is laid is his mercy and kindness to man.

Nabu was the patron deity of Borsippa, the sister city of Babylon. The two cities were so closely united in the course of time that Herodotus believed them to be but one. This close connection facilitated the transference of Nabu's functions to Marduk, and the former is then represented as the latter's son. That in earlier times Nabu played a prominent part is shown in that he is represented as bearing the Tables of Destiny. He was the patron deity of priests and scribes. Later there was a tendency in Assyria to restore him to a position of greater honour.<sup>1</sup> He is mentioned together with Bel (Isa. 46<sup>1</sup>) under his more familiar name Nebo.

Nergal, "the lord of the great dwelling," is god of the underworld, which he rules in conjunction with his consort Erishkigal. From him proceed disease and pestilence, which in the Amarna letters is referred to as "the hand of Nergal." So too in the astrological texts plague is frequently called "Nergal's devouring." The chief seat of his worship was Kutha.

Ramman, or Adad, is specifically the god of rain, storm, lightning, and thunder. He is of special interest as having been imported into Babylonia from Syria, where he was indigenous. In his original form he appears to have been a solar deity. He is also a god of the mountains. In

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 138.

Babylonia he is associated with the giving of oracles and revelation. In the earlier period his importance was very great, but later he was overshadowed by more popular divinities. An early Sumerian hymn<sup>1</sup> speaks of him as

“ The Lord, who in his anger makes the heavens tremble  
 Adad, who in his wrath shakes the earth.  
 Before his anger, before his wrath,  
 Before his roaring, before his thunder,  
 The gods of heaven climb up into heaven,  
 The gods of the underworld descend into the under-  
 world.”

Ashur, as the god of the city sharing his name, the old capital of the Assyrian empire, naturally became the principal god in the Assyrian pantheon. His position was exalted by the simple process of substituting his name for those of other deities in the Babylonian myths, so that the attributes and achievements of those deities became his by simple transfer. We have a very clear case of this process in the Assyrian version of *enuma elish*, where Ashur's name replaces that of Marduk. His name is sometimes written Anshar, in order to identify him with the ancient deity Anshar, who appears in the cosmogony as a predecessor of Anu. His symbol is a disc with wings or rays, from which it may be inferred that he was primitively a solar deity. He became for the warlike Assyrians the god of battle. Clay has argued that Ashur, like Adad, was really a West Semitic god imported into Assyria.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jeremias, *Handbuch*, p. 282.

<sup>2</sup> Clay, EOA, pp. 170f.

Of all the deities, however, the most beloved was Ishtar, who fills the place occupied in popular Roman Catholicism by the Virgin. She is the great mother-goddess, cause of the fruitfulness of earth and creature. She presides over the birth of mortals, and is not infrequently represented as mother of the gods themselves. She is the goddess of love, and was associated with the star Venus. Like the Virgin she owns as one of her designations "Queen of Heaven." It is most probable that the "Queen of Heaven" whose worship proved so seductive to the Jewish women was Ishtar. At a later period she becomes, rather strangely, the goddess of war. She is especially associated with Tammuz in the cult of the dying god. To Ishtar are addressed some of the most beautiful of the hymns, charged with deep feeling.

### § 2. CULT, DIVINATION, MAGIC.

The worship of all these deities was celebrated with the most elaborate ritual in magnificent temples. Around the shrines revolved the whole daily life, and the priests were the most important members of the community. Yet while the religion sometimes, especially in the hymns, attains considerable emotional and ethical heights, the gods are regarded as capricious. Their favour is withdrawn upon slight grounds, and often for reasons which the worshipper is quite unable to discover. Moreover, many of the gods were definitely hostile to mankind. Of these, and the kindred spirits and

demons, men stood in abject fear. The result was that the practices of divination and magic became more important than religion in the ordinary sense of the term. For where the behaviour of the gods was so incalculable by the processes of reason it was of the utmost importance to find other means by which it might be ascertained, if possible, how the gods would act in reference to any projected undertaking. Oracles were sought from the gods, sometimes by the use of "signs," sometimes by means of direct revelation to the priest. Since the gods were connected, or identified, with stars, there was developed the very complete system of astrology for which Babylon is perhaps chiefly renowned.

Inscriptions of the oldest times, as far back as Sargon of Agade, show us the monarchs consulting the priest whose special function it was to deal with omens, the *baru*. In later times collections of these omens were used as precedents. Elaborate collections were formed, too, in which the signification of portents, and also of ordinary phenomena such as the movements of animals, was dealt with. One such collection, to quote an example, is devoted to the interpretations of monstrous births, human and animal. Dreams, the shadow, personal appearance, the hearth-fire—almost anything and everything could be similarly employed. Divination by means of oil cast on the surface of water in a divining-bowl was in great favour in the time of the Hammurabi dynasty. This method of divination played a great part in Egyptian magic,

and the language of the Demotical Magic Papyrus suggests that the custom came into Egypt from Babylonia.<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note that the cup which was one of Joseph's treasures is definitely stated to have been used by him for the purpose of divination (Gen. 44<sup>5</sup>) and in all probability it was this oil-magic method that he employed. Daiches<sup>2</sup> has shown that this form of magic is found among the Jews in the time of the Talmud, and later, and, moreover, that the Jewish practice is derived from Babylon. As the gods at an early stage of the religion were connected with the various heavenly bodies, divination by means of the stars becomes inevitable, and is illustrated by a multitude of texts. An interesting feature is that the class of priests whose duty it was to utter oracles appears to have contained a large proportion of women: in one collection of eight oracles no fewer than six are given through priestesses.

A most elaborate means of divination was based upon the inspection of the liver of a sacrificed animal.<sup>3</sup> The functions of the bodily organs were in ancient times very imperfectly understood. Recognizing that "the blood is the life," people supposed that the heart and the liver, which are intimately associated with the blood, were the most important organs. Thus where we speak of the brain, the Hebrews spoke of the heart. On the other hand for the Hebrews the seat of emotions

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Daiches, *Babylonian Oil Magic in the Talmud and in the later Jewish literature*, pp. 5f.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Ezek. 21<sup>21</sup>.

was not, as with us, the heart, but the "bowels." The Babylonians in earlier stages considered the liver to be the seat of life, though in later times the heart took pre-eminence. In the Old Testament, too, traces of the importance of the liver are to be found.<sup>1</sup>

The divination of the liver of an animal that had been sacrificed to a god was carried out by the *baru* priest. Jastrow contends<sup>2</sup> that *baru*, which might be literally translated "looker," and in a derived sense "seer," though it is used of divining priests generally, was originally the specific name for an inspector of livers. The theory underlying the whole practice is that the god and the sacrificed victim are identified through the act of sacrifice, and that consequently the liver or "soul" of the animal may be equated to the liver or "soul" of the god. Thus an inspection of the peculiar markings of the liver—which varies from animal to animal in an infinite number of ways—enables the *baru* to interpret the mind of the deity. Long series of tablets were compiled giving the correct interpretation of these variations. There is in the British Museum a clay model<sup>3</sup> of a sheep's liver, which by the type of writing upon it is generally assigned to the Hammurabi period, having its different sections marked with prognostications, very much after the fashion in which the phrenologist labels his specimen head. The Old Testament

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Lam. 2<sup>11</sup>; Prov. 7<sup>13</sup>.   <sup>2</sup> Jastrow, *Religion*, pp. 162f.

<sup>3</sup> See plate following p. 190 in Jastrow, *Belief*. His whole chapter on divination should be consulted.

regulations as to the “caul above the liver”<sup>1</sup>—by which is meant the finger-shaped appendix hanging from the upper lobe of the liver, which was a prominent feature of the various signs considered by the Babylonian diviner—are almost certainly intended to prevent the practice in Israel of liver divination.

In the time of the Assyrian kings Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal, 680-668, large collections of oracle formulæ were made, fragments of no fewer than 166 such texts having been discovered. They take the form of questions addressed to the sun-god. They follow stereotyped lines, and relate exclusively to matters concerning the state and dynasty. Zimmern has directed attention to another similar series, in which the questions are addressed to Shamash and Adad jointly.

The question has been raised whether it is possible to draw any sharp line between the use of magic by private persons, and its employment in the official cult. Langdon says :

“ From the historic period the priests of magic who were consecrated in the mysteries of incantation, who were summoned on all occasions to oppose the demons and *mamit*,<sup>2</sup> appear to have been excluded from the temples, and certainly had no part in conducting public worship. Sumero-Babylonian temple worship consists in the singing of long litanies characterized by mournful refrains,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Ex. 29<sup>13</sup>, 22; Lev. 3<sup>4</sup>, 10, 15, 7<sup>4</sup>, 8<sup>16</sup>, 25, 9<sup>10</sup>, 19.

<sup>2</sup> A word used for a curse uttered by wizards. Cf. Langdon, *Babylonian Magic*, p. 226.

intricate musical melodies, ending with a mournful recessional to the mournful sound of the flute, No magical ceremonies, no sacrifices of any kind. accompany these long services. Magic, therefore, has no place in the origin of Sumerian religion in so far as religion is a social and communal aspect of human society. This line of cleavage between the open and the private cult is unmistakable and characteristic of this religion."<sup>1</sup>

However that may be, the private cult of magic appears to have counted almost as the main feature of the popular religion. An interesting light is thrown upon the practice of magic in the Egyptian text quoted by Gardiner,<sup>2</sup> which states that the sun-god made for men "magic as weapons to ward off (evil) events." Gardiner says, "This sentence confirms my view of Egyptian magic as a kind of *privata religio*, i.e., the principles of religion deliberately applied to individual and personal ends."<sup>3</sup> It was doubtless in this spirit that the Babylonian resorted to magic in his contests with demons and witches.

All bodily ailments might be attributed to the spite of some evil spirit: indeed, ills such as headache, toothache, fever, had each their special demon as cause. Some of these are spirits of the departed, notably the Utukku and Elimmu demons. To each man was assigned an evil god as counterpart to his protecting deity, on the analogy of the more modern idea of a man's good and bad angels.

<sup>1</sup> Langdon, *Babylonian Magic*, p. 228.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. p. 125f.

<sup>3</sup> Gardiner, JEA, Vol. I, Part I, p. 24.

The human wizard or witch also might be the cause of trouble. Frequently in the exorcism texts these evil powers are referred to collectively as "the seven." Probably this conception lies behind the "seven other spirits more evil than himself" which the unclean spirit of Luke 11<sup>24-26</sup> took to himself.

Spells were used to avert evil, but when, despite them, the evil fastened upon the victim recourse was had to incantations and ceremonies of purification. The sufferer was sprinkled with pure water, obtained from some sacred source. Fire, as another great purifying element, also plays a great part in the ceremonies. Two great collections of incantation texts, the Maqlu and Shurpu series, are named after the ceremony of burning which forms their culmination. The former series is written throughout in Semitic, but the latter contains some Semitic, some Sumerian, and some bilingual, texts. The existence of bilingual texts would not in itself suffice to prove that the practice of magic was derived by the Semitic inhabitants from their predecessors the Sumerians : Sumerian was treated as a sacred language, like the Latin of the Roman church, and we possess bilingual documents in which the internal evidence enables us to decide without the slightest hesitation that the Semitic part is the original and the Sumerian derived from it. But we have already seen that there are other grounds for believing that much of the magic cult is inherited from the Sumerians.

One favourite method of procedure was to construct from some such substance as clay—as a

matter of fact no less than ten different possible materials are named in the instructions—a figure of the demon or witch who is responsible for the trouble. This image is burned, on the principle of sympathetic magic. The formula at the end of the first tablet of the Maqlu series may be quoted as an illustration. It is spoken, or, to be more exact, whispered, by the priest.

“ I raise the torch, burn up their images,  
 The images of the Utukku, Shedu, Rabisu, Ekimmu,  
 Labartu, Labasu, Ahhazu,  
 Lilu, Lilitu, Ardat Lili,<sup>1</sup>  
 And all evil that seizes mankind  
 Tremble, melt, vanish away !  
 May your smoke arise to heaven ! ”<sup>2</sup>

The whole concludes with an appeal to the son of Ea,<sup>3</sup> the great magician. From the number of evil spirits named it is evident that every opportunity was taken to hit on the particular one who might happen to be responsible.

Another interesting use of the clay figure is found in a series of texts dealing with the exorcism of Namtaru, the pest demon. Ea is represented as bidding Marduk—whose part was, no doubt, performed by the exorcist—take a piece of clay, mould it into the shape of the sick man, and lay it on the sick man’s body during the night. When morning dawns his body is to be “covered”—the word is a technical expression derived from the same root as *kpr*,<sup>4</sup>—the incantation of

<sup>1</sup> Names of demons.

<sup>2</sup> Weber, *Literatur*, p. 159.

<sup>3</sup> i.e., Marduk.

<sup>4</sup> Rendered in the Old Testament by “ make atonement.”

Eridu uttered, and then the pest demon will depart from the body of his victim. But for further examples the reader must be referred to books dealing in greater detail with the subject.

### § 3. RELIGIOUS POETRY.

It is generally agreed that the religion of Babylonia reaches its culminating point in the hymns and psalms. Such religious poetry as has been recovered Weber<sup>1</sup> groups into three classes. First, prayers, which implore the help of the god for his suppliant ; secondly, psalms, which bring the bodily and spiritual needs of the psalmist to the notice of the god ; thirdly, hymns, which sing the god's praises. It is clear that such a division is not easy to make, for it is impossible to say at what point a psalm as thus defined passes into a prayer. Weber frankly admits that it is impossible to carry his division through rigidly. The three types may be combined in one utterance ; a hymn of praise is the frequent and natural prelude to a prayer. It is very remarkable that, though the Babylonians no doubt had their songs of love and conviviality, practically nothing of these has survived ; whereas the bulk of the religious poetry is very considerable.

The question of date is a very difficult one to decide. Many of these poems are bilingual, but this in itself proves nothing as to their age.<sup>2</sup> We

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Weber, *Literatur*, Chapter X, an excellent discussion, to which the author is much indebted.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 70.

are driven back upon internal evidence, and this is insufficient to determine the question. The internal evidence may sometimes show the provenance of a hymn ; as, for instance, when we recognize that the deities named are Babylonian or Assyrian. An attempt to date the poems on religious or artistic characteristics is vitiated by its extreme subjectivity. Consequently we find the most widely different opinions expressed on this point. Even the few examples which bear the name of a particular king and are related to some definite event may well be older hymns adapted for a particular occasion, for they employ the same type of phraseology and liturgical form which we find in those that are anonymous. Very many of our specimens we owe to the collection made by Ashurbanipal, and copies from this source are marked *kima labirishu* = like the old copy. Bahr thinks that the penitential psalms from Ashurbanipal's library were very probably composed in the third millennium B.C. In one of them he believes an allusion to the oppression of Babylon by Elam, c. 2300, may be traced<sup>1</sup> : but Elam was so often aggressive that the passage might have other applications. Bahr also finds in these psalms some evidence of Shamanism, which, he says, is native to no Semitic people. From this he deduces that the psalms in question must have been derived from Sumerian sources.<sup>2</sup> Baentsch is content to say that they are in any case old, transmitted from century to century, and seems dubious about taking them so far back as

<sup>1</sup> Bahr, BP, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Bahr, BP, p. 27.

the third millennium, and Jeremias cautiously decides<sup>1</sup> that they "derive as a whole perhaps from a very ancient time." Jastrów says that penitential psalms may go back as far as 2000 B.C., but is very doubtful if any of those preserved go back to that date.<sup>2</sup> Weber sums up the case very well, admitting that our present information prevents a definite decision :

" We must allow the possibility that in part they go back to the prehistoric period, and are Sumerian productions. But there is no ground to doubt that at all times new compositions of the kind may have arisen, or that among the priests who preserved the old poems many a one included the children of his own muse in the collections, and may have given them a Sumerian dress. Certain means of discriminating such later compositions we do not possess."<sup>3</sup>

In their literary form the hymns present many features which are found in the Biblical psalms. There is parallelism, synonymous, antithetic, and synthetic. Strophic form is also found, in at least one case with a recurrent refrain. Quite apart from any religious value we may find in them, they have high literary merit.

They were in many cases obviously constructed for liturgical use. Some of them are cast in the form of a dialogue, in which the suppliant, and the officiating priest, as mediator between him and

<sup>1</sup> Jeremias, MS, pp. 34f.

<sup>2</sup> Jastrow, *Religion*, p. 317.

<sup>3</sup> Weber, *op. cit.*, pp. 118f.

the deity, have their allotted lines. They are often accompanied by regulations for sacrifice. In Weber's judgment many of them, however, may originally have been personal utterances afterwards converted into liturgical formulae.

One extraordinary feature about these psalms, many of which breathe a very lofty spirit, is that very many of them have survived only as embodied in crude incantations. Are we then to assume that the psalms and incantations belong originally together? The answer to this question may vary according to the particular case considered, but it is extremely difficult to believe that the more elevated of the psalms never had an existence independent of incantations. Caspari has compared the vocabulary of the penitential psalms with that of the Shurpu series of exorcism texts,<sup>1</sup> and exhibited a number of parallels, which might easily be multiplied. But he rightly concludes that such parallels are far from proving any direct dependence, whether of the psalms upon the exorcisms, as a refinement, or of the exorcisms on the psalms, as a degradation. Daiches calls attention<sup>2</sup> to the custom in vogue among the Jews of using the Bible in similar fashion for magical purposes, and notes that the book most favoured for this purpose was Psalms. This practice was taken over from them by the Christians. So that if the Babylonians inherited the custom from the Sumerians we have a mediæval Christian practice which may be traced

<sup>1</sup> Caspari, ABP, pp. 29f.

<sup>2</sup> Daiches, *Babylonian Oil Magic, etc.*, pp. 41f.

back link by link to the earliest known inhabitants of Babylonia.

The first of these compositions from which we will quote is an extremely fine hymn to Ishtar, which is headed "Incantation," and in its subscription is described as a "Prayer of the raising of the hand to Ishtar." The subscription further informs us that it was copied from an original at Borsippa, by Nergal-balatsu-ikbi, son of Ataradkalme, the magician, "written for the preservation of his life," and deposited in Marduk's temple Esagila, in Babylon. It contains 113 lines, and was published originally by King in *The Seven Tablets of Creation*.<sup>1</sup> The hymn opens with an ascription of praise to the goddess "the light of heaven and earth . . . . exalted above all gods." She is "the star<sup>2</sup> of lamentation," as goddess of war making strife among men. She perfects the law of earth and heaven.

"At the thought of thy name heaven and earth quake,  
The gods quake, falter the Anunnaki.<sup>3</sup>  
To thy great name mankind payeth homage.

\* \* \* \* \*

The cause of men with justice and right thou judgest  
Thou lookest with mercy upon the oppressed and rightest  
the crushed<sup>4</sup> every morning.

\* \* \* \* \*

<sup>1</sup> Vol. I, *Transliteration and translation*, pp. 222-237. Text in Vol. 2. Transliteration and translation also in Rogers, CP, pp. 153-161; Dhorme, *Choix*, pp. 356-365. Translation in Gressmann, TuB, I, pp. 85-88, and Handcock, BP, pp. 8-13.

<sup>2</sup> Reading *kakkab tamukati* with Dhorme and Rogers, rather than *mulanukati*, "cause of lamentation," with King.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. p. 134.

<sup>4</sup> Rather than "violent and unruly," with King and Dhorme. These may be more normal renderings, but are not suitable in the context.

Goddess of men, goddess of women, whose counsel none understandeth,

Where thou glancest the dead live again, the sick recover,

He who is wrong becomes right, when he sees thy face."

After the ascription of praise follows the piteous plaint of the sufferer. How long are his sighs and pains to be unheeded ? Will not his angry goddess, who is like a " raging wild ox," be appeased ! Will she not put an end to the evil wherewith his body has been bewitched !

" I moan like a dove, night and day,  
 I am crushed and wail bitterly,  
 With pain and grief my soul is distressed.  
 What have I done, my god and my goddess ?  
 As though I did not fear my god and my goddess is my fate.  
 Sickness, headache, destruction, and ruin are come upon me ;  
 Misery, turning away of the face, and fulness of wrath are my lot,  
 Indignation, anger, wrath of gods and men.

\* \* \* \* \*

Laid waste is my sanctuary (?), laid waste is my shrine, Over my house, my gate, and my fields, is desolation poured out !

\* \* \* \* \*

Dissolve my transgression, my iniquity, my fault, and my offence,

Forgive my fault, give heed to my supplication, Free my breast and comfort me !

Guide my steps that joyful and free I may walk among men !

Give commandment, that upon thy commandment my angry god may be gracious again, And my goddess who is turned from me may turn again.

That my darkened, smoking brazier may shine,  
My quenched torch may be rekindled,  
My scattered family reassemble !

\* \* \* \* \*

How long, my lady, wilt thou rage with averted face !

\* \* \* \* \*

Let thy great mercy be my portion,  
That those who behold me in the street may magnify thy  
name !

I also will glorify thy godhead and thy power among men.  
Ishtar is exalted ! Ishtar is queen !

My lady is exalted ! My lady is queen !

Irnini,<sup>1</sup> the mighty daughter of Sin, hath not her like !”

Again and again as we read the hymn we are reminded of the Old Testament. How familiar are many of the phrases ! The words in which the goddess is exhorted to turn her averted face are just such words as the psalmists and prophets use. “ Whose counsel none understandeth ” recalls Isa. 40<sup>28</sup>. The “ darkened, smoking brazier ” brings to mind at once the “ dimly burning wick,” and the “ quenched torch ” recalls :

“ Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out [.]  
And the spark of his fire shall not shine.  
The light shall be dark in his tent,  
And his lamp beside him shall be put out.”<sup>2</sup>

The moaning of the dove, again, is a frequently recurring figure in the Old Testament : the plaint of Hezekiah, “ I did mourn as a dove,”<sup>3</sup> furnishes almost an exact parallel both in language and

<sup>1</sup> Another goddess, whose name—which in Semitic thought is equivalent to her personality—is here transferred to Ishtar. Elsewhere in the hymn Ishtar is similarly invested with the name of another goddess, Gushea.

<sup>2</sup> Job 18<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Isa. 38<sup>14</sup>.

situation. Nor are ethical traits absent from this plaint to Ishtar. The goddess is represented as both just and merciful. The suppliant emphasizes his sin in language not unworthy of a Hebrew prophet. But unfortunately it seems clear that such words as "sin," "fault," "transgression," had a meaning in these Babylonian hymns far more superficial than such words have in the Bible. They do not describe offences against a moral law, or a righteous deity ethically conceived. They are rather transgressions of a ritual kind, which the offender has unwittingly committed, so incurring the wrath of his god and goddess, he knows not why. That he has committed some offence he is sure: his sufferings are evidence that he has offended the heavenly powers. But the sense of sin would seem to be nothing more than a logical inference from the experience of suffering. The object of the prayer is not primarily that the petitioner may be made a better man, but rather that he may be freed from the penalty of suffering which he has incurred. We cannot forget, too, that as we have the hymn it is but part of a magic exercise. The instruction at the end runs:

"This is the ritual; thou shalt kneel at the foot, a green bough shalt thou set up. \* \* \*

<sup>1</sup> This incantation thou shalt recite three times before the goddess Ishtar \* \* and thou shalt not look behind thee!"

And if it be urged that to judge the fine hymn by its magical accompaniments is as unfair as it would

<sup>1</sup> A number of instructions are omitted here.

be to judge a Hebrew psalm upon the magical formulæ with which later Jews surrounded it, there is still a vast gulf to be crossed. We are quite ready to believe that the hymn once existed in a separate form, free from its gross additions. But it is very far from ethical monotheism even then. Ishtar may be exalted above the gods but the other gods are still very real. Ishtar is really appealed to in order that she may constrain the god and goddess of the suppliant by her superior power. It is just like applying to the court of appeal to reverse the decision of a lower court.

Our second example is another “prayer of the raising of the hand,” addressed to Nergal, the god of the underworld. Several copies of this text were found in the Ashurbanipal archives. Like the preceding example it is prefaced by the title “Incantation.”

“ Mighty lord, exalted, first-born of Nunamnir,<sup>1</sup>  
 First among the Anunnaki, lord of battle,  
 Offspring of Kutushar,<sup>2</sup> the great queen,  
 Nergal, thou mightiest of gods, beloved of Ninmenna.  
 Brilliant art thou in the bright heaven,<sup>3</sup> exalted is thy  
 place !  
 Great art thou in the underworld, thou hast no rivals !  
 Beside Ea in the assembly of the gods is thy counsel  
 pre-eminent,  
 Beside Sin thou perceivest all in heaven.  
 Thy father Ellil<sup>4</sup> gave thee all mankind, all that has  
 breath,

<sup>1</sup> Another title for Ellil.      <sup>2</sup> =Ninlil, the consort of Ellil.

<sup>3</sup> Though he became later a god of the underworld Nergal was probably in the first place a solar deity.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 56f.

The cattle of the field, the swarm, he hath entrusted to thy hand.  
 As for me X, son of Y, thy servant—  
 Anger of the god and of the goddess is my portion,  
 Need and ruin are in my house.  
 That I cry and am not heard is my affliction.  
 Because thou art full of compassion, I turn to thy divinity.  
 Because thou art merciful, I resort to thee.  
 Because thou regardest, I look toward thy face.  
 Because thou art gracious, I come before (thee).  
 Gaze thou upon me and hear (my plaint).  
 Let thy angry heart (be appeased).  
 Loose my guilt (blot out), my sin.  
 May the anger of thy divine heart be appeased !  
 God and goddess who are wrathful and angry, be gracious again to me !  
 Thy greatness will I proclaim, and with praise do homage to thee.”<sup>1</sup>

This prayer follows the same order as the previous example, beginning with an ascription of praise, passing to a description of the suppliant's plight, and then to the petition. It is much more formal and stereotyped than its predecessor, and the suffering of the petitioner is spoken of in much more vague and general language. We note the same exaltation of the god addressed to a position of monarchic power among other gods: but, as before, other gods are recognized, with power sufficient to plague their victim. Perhaps the most interesting feature of the prayer is the line which contains blanks to be filled up with the names of the suppliant and his father. The document is as much a recognized form as, say, the marriage service in the English Prayer Book. This line is

<sup>1</sup> The translation is taken from Gressmann, TuF, pp. 89f.

found in most of the "raising of the hand" prayers. The largest number of the latter are addressed to Marduk, Ishtar, or Sin, but examples occur addressed to Shamash, Nabu, Tashmetu, Adad, Ba-u, Damkina, and a few to particular divine stars.<sup>1</sup> We may assume from this that a man in trouble would go to his temple, get the priest to select from a collection of such liturgical forms one which was addressed to the man's particular patron deity, and then recite it, filling in the names as the circumstances demanded.

Our third example also hails from the Ashurbanipal library. It is a bilingual text, copied from an older document.<sup>2</sup>

" May the enraged heart of my Lord be appeased !  
 May the god whom I know not be appeased !  
 May the goddess whom I know not be appeased !  
 May the god whom I know, whom I know not, be  
 appeased !  
 May the goddess whom I know, whom I know not, be  
 appeased !  
 May the heart of my god be appeased !  
 May the heart of my goddess be appeased !  
 May my god and my goddess be appeased !  
 May the god who (is enraged) with me be appeased !  
 May the goddess (who is enraged with me be appeased) !  
 The sin (which I have committed I know not),  
 The error (which I have committed I know not).  
 A good name (may my god utter) !  
 A good name (may my goddess utter) !  
 A good name (may the god whom I know, know not,  
 utter) !

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Weber, *Literatur*, p. 155.

<sup>2</sup> Transliteration and translation, Zimmern, BP, pp. 61-66. Translation, Gressmann, TuB, I, pp. 9of.; Handcock, BP, pp. 5-7.

A good name (may the goddess whom I know, know not, utter) !  
 (Pure) food have I not eaten.  
 (Clear) water have I not drunk.<sup>1</sup>  
 That which is abominable unto my god have I unwittingly eaten.  
 Upon that which is loathsome (?) to my goddess have I unwittingly trodden.  
 Lord, my sins are many, great are my errors !  
 My god, my sins are many, great are my errors !  
 God whom I know, whom I know not, my sins are many, great are my errors !  
 Goddess whom I know, whom I know not, my sins are many, great are my errors !  
 The sin I have committed I know not.  
 The error I have made I know not.  
 The abomination which I ate I know not.  
 The loathsome thing upon which I trod I know not.  
 The lord has looked upon me in the wrath of his heart,  
 The god has encountered me in the anger of his heart.  
 The goddess hath been indignant with me and brought me into trouble.  
 The god whom I know, know not, hath oppressed me.  
 The goddess whom I know, know not, hath brought me into sorrow.  
 I sought for help, but none took me by the hand.  
 I wailed, but none drew near to my side.  
 I cried aloud, but none heard me.  
 Full of sorrow, I am prostrate, look not up.  
 To my merciful god I turn, and sigh aloud.  
 The feet of my goddess I kiss and caress (?).  
 To the god whom I know, know not, I sigh aloud.  
 To the goddess whom I know, know not, I sigh aloud.  
 O lord, look in pity upon me and hear my cries.  
 O goddess, look in pity upon me and hear my cries.

<sup>1</sup> Jastrow, *Religion*, p. 320, interprets these two lines of fasting by way of penance. The context would suggest rather some infraction of ritual observance.

God whom I know, know not (look in pity upon me and  
hear my cries.)  
 Goddess whom I know, know not (look in pity upon me  
and hear my cries.)  
 How long, my god, (wilt thou be angry with me ?)  
 How long, my goddess, (wilt thou be angry with me ?)  
 How long, god whom I know, know not, (wilt thou be  
angry with me ?)  
 How long, goddess whom I know, know not, will thine  
hostile heart not be appeased ?  
 Men are perverse, and understand nothing.  
 Men, all who are named with names,<sup>1</sup> what do they know ?  
 Do they good or do they evil, they understand nothing.  
 Lord, cast not thy servant down !  
 Into the watery swamp is he fallen, take him by the  
hand !<sup>2</sup>  
 The sin which I have committed turn thou to good !  
 The error which I have made, may the wind carry it  
away !  
 My evil deeds, strip off as a garment !<sup>3</sup>  
 My god, my sins are seven times seven—forgive my sins !  
 My goddess, my sins are seven times seven—forgive my  
sins !  
 God whom I know, know not, my sins are seven times  
seven—forgive my sins !  
 Goddess whom I know, know not, my sins are seven times  
seven—forgive my sins !  
 Forgive my sins, and I will pay homage to thee.  
 May thy heart be appeased, as the heart of a mother who  
has given birth !  
 Like a mother who has given birth, a father who has  
begotten a child, may it be appeased !

<sup>1</sup> i.e., who exist.

<sup>2</sup> The two lines in which the suppliant is spoken of in the third person are taken by Jastrow (*op. cit.*, p. 321) as interjected by the officiating priest. This is possible, but not absolutely necessary.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Isa. 11<sup>8</sup>, where “scarlet” is really “crimson robes.”

This prayer exemplifies both the fineness and the coarseness of the Babylonian hymns. Especially in the latter half it rises to dignity both of feeling and expression. The reflections upon the lack of understanding in mankind, and their utter inability to discern the ways of the gods, indicate a fairly advanced stage of intellectual growth. The formula "seven times seven" reminds us of the "seventy times seven" of Jesus, and seems to imply a deep consciousness of sin. On the other hand the elaborate and careful repetition of the references to the god and goddess, known and unknown, touch the other extreme. Upon the prayer the most diverse judgments have been expressed. Zimmern finds that it is permeated by a monotheistic tone.<sup>1</sup> The fact that no divine names appear in it has been urged in favour of regarding the prayer as attaining at any rate a stage on the road towards monotheism. The reference to the "unknown god" has been interpreted in the sense of Acts 17<sup>23</sup>. Jastrow cannot find here even "a bridge leading to an approach" to monotheism.<sup>2</sup> This judgment Jeremias regards as too harsh, though even he, while speaking of this text as possibly the finest of the Babylonian penitential psalms, a verdict we should hesitate to accept, cannot regard it as truly monotheistic.<sup>3</sup> The truth is that the prayer is the utterance of a man whose misfortunes have convinced him that he has

<sup>1</sup> Zimmern, BP, p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> Jastrow, *Religion*, p. 319.

<sup>3</sup> Jeremias, MS, pp. 38f.

offended some deity, but he is not sure which one. Not knowing what is the nature of his offence, which he appears to take for granted is against ritual rather than against ethics, how can he be sure what god is plaguing him? So he casts his net wide in order to make sure that whoever the deity may be he shall not escape. The subscription to the hymns informs us that it may be used "for any god whatever." In our judgment the prayer, so far from being permeated by a monotheistic tendency, is essentially polytheistic. The suppliant has not yet reached the stage when he can think of gods without consort goddesses.

One small fragment<sup>1</sup> may be quoted, not so much for the interest of its subject-matter, for it contains nothing that the preceding examples will not have made plain, but because it exhibits clearly the dialogue form, distributed between priest and penitent.

"I, thy servant, full of sighing, cry unto thee.  
 Who has sin—his supplication accept thou !  
 Lookest thou in pity upon a man—that man lives !  
 O almighty mistress of mankind,  
 Merciful one, to whom it is good to turn, accept my  
 sighing !

(The priest then speaks)

While his god and goddess are angry with him, he cries  
 to thee.

Turn thy face towards him, grasp his hand.

<sup>1</sup> Transliteration and translation, Zimmern, BP, pp. 9f.  
 Translation, Handcock, BP, p. 15.

## (The suppliant continues)

Beside thee there is no guiding deity.

Look in pity upon me, receive my sighing.

Speak, 'How long ?'<sup>1</sup> and let thy countenance be appeased !

How long, my lady ! ere thou turn thy face to me ?

I wail like doves, sate myself with sighing.

## (The priest resumes)

Because of woe and pain his soul is full of sighing ;

Tears he sheds, into cries of woe he breaks forth."

The beginning of the prayer, which has been lost, contained, no doubt, the usual ascription of praise to the deity addressed, who was in all probability the goddess Ishtar. Something, too, has been lost from the end. It seems not impossible that the second and third lines quoted might be assigned to the priest.

Our final example,<sup>2</sup> often known as the "Psalm of Innocence," is distinctly of a more literary type, and has affinities with the Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament, as well as with the psalms. It comes from the Ashurbanipal archives ; evidently it had already in the time of that monarch become a literary classic, for in the collection there was found also a philological commentary on the text of the document. This deduction is confirmed by the discovery of a considerably older duplicate

<sup>1</sup> i.e., "before my prayer is answered." A difficult passage, on which see Zimmern's note, *op. cit.*, pp. 28f.

<sup>2</sup> Transliteration and translation, Dhorme, *Choix*, pp. 372-379 ; Rogers, CP, pp. 164-169 ; Ball, *Job*, pp. 12-30 (a very full discussion). Translation Gressmann, TuB, I, pp. 92f. ; Weber, *Literatur*, pp. 135-137 ; Jastrow, *Die Religion*, pp. 120-133. Cf. also Gray, *Job*, ICC, pp. xxxi-xxxiii.

of the text at Sippar. The tablet containing the psalm is numbered as the second of a series, and from the commentary it is possible to recover fragments of the first and third, if not also of the fourth, tablets. These appear to have been, not as is the case with so many series, a collection of similar but independent documents, but parts of a literary unity.

Jastrow has identified another small tablet as part of a variant version of the third tablet. If this suggestion proves to be well founded we shall know the name of the sufferer who speaks in the psalm, a fabulous king called Tabi-utul-Bel.<sup>1</sup> The second tablet runs :

" I attained unto (long) life, passed beyond the allotted span.  
 Wherever I turn it is evil, evil ;<sup>2</sup>  
 My oppression is increased, my deliverance I see not.  
 I cried unto my god, but he showed me not his face ;  
 I implored my goddess, but she lifted not her head.  
 The diviner gave no divination by means of oracle ;  
 By means of a gift (=sacrifice) the seer did not establish  
 my right.  
 I turned to the necromancer, but he did not open my ear ;  
 The magician by his charms did not unloose my ban.  
 How perverse are things everywhere !  
 When I looked behind me calamity pursued me (?).  
 As one who has not prepared the sacrifices for his god,  
 And who has not named his goddess at the offering,  
 (As though) my face had not been bowed, my adoration  
 not seen ;

<sup>1</sup> Ball follows Landesdorfer in taking the hero's name to be Shubshi-meshre-Nergal.

<sup>2</sup> The lines recall Ecclesiastes. The speaker, with the experience of a long life, finds all is vanity.

(As though I were one) in whose mouth prayer and supplication were withheld,  
 (For whom) the day of god had ceased, the new-moon feast remained unobserved,<sup>1</sup>  
 Who had lain upon his side,<sup>2</sup> despising the images of the gods ;  
 Who instructed not his people in (their)<sup>3</sup> fear and veneration ;  
 Who named not his god, and ate his (the god's) food ;  
 Who abandoned his goddess, brought not a document (?) ;  
 Who ? ? ? <sup>4</sup> forgot his lord ;  
 Who spoke lightly the name of his powerful god—I was like him !  
 I myself thought only of prayer and petition :  
 Petition was my rule, sacrifice my law : the day on which the gods were honoured was the day of my heart :  
 The day when the goddess was followed was my gain and wealth :  
 The prayer of the king<sup>5</sup> was my joy,  
 And his song was my delight.  
 I instructed my country to keep god's name ;  
 To honour the name of the goddess I taught my people.  
 The honour of the king I exalted,  
 And taught the people to reverence the palace.  
 Would that I knew that this was pleasing to god !  
 But what to a man himself seems good is an abomination to god.  
 What, however, in his heart is despicable is good in the eyes of god.  
 Who knows the thought of the gods in heaven ?

<sup>1</sup> In such words might a priest have described Isaiah ! The word rendered "new-moon-feast," *eshshesi*, Zimmern has derived from *eshshu*, from the same sort as *hodhesh*, the Hebrew *new-moon*. Ball is inclined to connect with *ashashu*, =grieve, be sad, and renders *fasts* (?), p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., "been negligent."      <sup>3</sup> The gods'.

<sup>4</sup> The rendering here is uncertain.

<sup>5</sup> The speaker himself is the king. Weber suggests that the title here means the god Bel. This would ease the difficulty.

The counsel of god, full of obscurity (?), who grasps it ?  
 How should pale-faced men discern the way of god ?  
 Who was still living in the evening was (next) morning  
 dead :  
 Swiftly he gat him into the darkness, and suddenly was  
 he smitten.  
 At one moment he is singing and playing ;  
 In a trice is he wailing as a mourner.  
 Moment by moment the thoughts of men are changed.  
 Are they in want ? then are they like a corpse ;  
 Are they sated ? then they liken themselves to their god.  
 Happy—they talk about climbing to heaven ;  
 Unhappy—they talk about descending to hell."

(Here is a great break in the text. The broken passage begins with the words, "An evil spirit of the dead is come forth from his lurking-place," and goes on to picture the piteous condition of the speaker.)

" The house is become my prison :  
 In the chain of my flesh are my arms placed :  
 In my own fetter are my feet cast.

(One line lost.)

With the whip hath he beaten me unceasingly (?) :  
 With the stick hath he pierced me with powerful thrust (?).  
 All the day long the pursuer pursues me ;  
 When night comes he allows me no breathing-space.<sup>1</sup>  
 In my restlessness my joints are loosened ;  
 My limbs are undone ? ? ? ?  
 Upon my bed I rolled like an ox ;<sup>2</sup>  
 Soiled myself like a sheep with my dirt.  
 My sicknesses have perplexed (?) the exorcist ;  
 And my omens hath the seer not understood.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Job 9<sup>17f.</sup>, " For he breaketh me with a tempest.  
 \* \* \* \* \*

He will not suffer me to take my breath."

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Job 7<sup>4</sup>, " When I lie down . . . I am full of tossings to and fro."

The purifying priest hath not healed the state of my sickness,  
 Nor has the seer put an end to my infirmity.<sup>1</sup>  
 No god helped me or grasped me by the hand ;  
 Nor was my goddess gracious, nor went she at my side.  
 Open was the tomb ; already had they possessed themselves of my habitation (?) ;  
 Before I was dead was my keenin<sub>g</sub>, song already begun.<sup>2</sup>  
 And mine eye abideth in their provocation.”  
 My whole land exclaimed, ‘ How is he destroyed ! ’  
 My enemy heard it and his face beamed ;  
 They brought her that hated me the good news, and her spirit rejoiced.  
 I knew a time ~~far~~ by whole family,  
 When in the midst of their protecting gods their divinity had pity.<sup>3</sup>

It is difficult to dissent from the view, often expressed, that in this poem we possess the finest piece of literature handed down to us by Babylonia. It reaches a high level of philosophical observation, and is expressed in language of great beauty and dignity. Some parts of it in their pathos touch the level of the sublime. Often it reminds us of Ecclesiastes, and, again, often of Job. Some individual echoes have been noted already ; the general attitude toward death, the sense of bewilderment in the presence of God, the inability “to reckon on his ways,” are common character-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Job 13<sup>4</sup>, “ Physicians of no value.”

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Job 17<sup>11</sup>, “ The grave is ready for me. Surely there are mockers with me.”

<sup>3</sup> The sense of the last two lines is not easy to gather. Rogers thinks the “ reference is to the protecting care exercised by the souls of ancestors,” *op. cit.*, p. 169<sup>1</sup>. Ball renders, p. 22, “ I thought of the day when all my family, Within the Door-gods adored their deity,” which is not very clear.

istics. The lines describing the unrelenting pursuit of the victim might almost have been used by Job himself, when he pictures Yahweh pursuing and tormenting him as a cat might play with a mouse. Like Job, the hero is a mighty man, and like him he has endeavoured to live a life of rectitude and benevolence. We cannot be surprised that some have seen in this Babylonian poem an original source of the book of Job.<sup>1</sup> There are, on the other hand, very many points of divergence both in form and matter. The suffering king seems disposed to admit he has done wrong, though he is completely bewildered as to what his fault may be. He appears to think that it has probably been some failure in a point of ritual observance. The ethical note is much less marked than in Job. And, although there is no gross polytheism in the Babylonian poem, the goddess is still recognized by the side of the god. While we think the coincidences in idea and expression are almost sufficient to demonstrate that the author of Job was acquainted with the Babylonian poem, we cannot see in his work any mere imitation of the older poem. His story, and his treatment are original. The other tablets of the poem go on to describe how the sufferer was healed, and glorify Marduk as his healer. Indeed the title of the whole is, "I will give praise to the lord of wisdom," that is, Marduk. If we accept, as we probably should do, Ball's conclusion<sup>2</sup> that "the purpose of

<sup>1</sup> Zimmern has compared the suffering king with the "suffering servant" of Isaiah.

<sup>2</sup> Ball, *Job*, p. 9.

this venerable relic of ancient piety is to glorify the god Merodach<sup>1</sup> as a healer and saviour, and to attract sufferers to his temple in hope of deliverance," we see at once how great a gulf there is between the poem and Job.

The illustrations we have given from the religious poetry of Babylonia show us the high-water mark that it reached. Our general verdict upon it has been anticipated in the discussion of the individual examples. Much of it is vibrant with pathos, and discloses a sincerely religious spirit. In its form it reaches great heights of beauty, and not infrequently approaches very closely the poetry of the Old Testament. But, while we gladly recognize the evidence that in Babylonia there were yearning souls stretching out faltering hands to God, we cannot regard these penitential psalms as being on the same level with the hymns of the Hebrew temple. Over the best of them hangs the obscuring cloud of polytheism. They may at times equal the Hebrew psalms in their expression of the poignant sorrows of humanity. But they lack that note of supreme confidence in a righteous and all-powerful God to which the Old Testament Psalmist will rise even from the depths of his despair. And above all we miss in them the bracing ethical atmosphere in which the poets of the Old Testament lived and moved and had their being. They are permeated with the belief that the chief end of man is to perform correctly the ritual observances demanded

<sup>1</sup> i.e., Marduk.

by religion. By no effort of the imagination can we think of a Babylonian psalmist saying, in the immortal words of Micah, “ He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good ; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God ? ” Therefore, so far from regarding, with some enthusiastic admirers, the Babylonian psalms as worthy to stand beside those of the Bible, we cannot see that in this respect the Old Testament is in any important sense a debtor to Babylonia.

#### § 4. LIFE AFTER DEATH.

The Babylonian idea of life after death might almost be obtained by inverting the faith of Browning’s Grammarian. Not the present life, but the after life is the “ pale lure.” The Babylonians were certainly among those who “ mistrust and say—‘ But time escapes, Live now or never ! ’ ” All through their history they practised the custom of burying, not burning, their dead. Probably their conception of the future existence as spent in an immense and gloomy cavern below the surface of the earth is developed from this method of disposing of the dead. The cavern was known as Arali by the Sumerians, and Arallu by the Babylonians. It is almost exactly the equivalent of the Biblical Sheol. One of the stereotyped descriptions of the life after death has a strangely modern note about it ; the abode of the dead is “ the place of no return.” As was the case with

Sheol, Arallu was a place of darkness and inactivity. Dust and clay were the nourishment of the dead. The Babylonian as the hour of death drew nigh would quite naturally have uttered the words of Job<sup>1</sup>—“For now shall I lie down in the dust ; and thou shalt seek me diligently but I shall not be.” “All go unto one place ; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again,”<sup>2</sup> was his creed as to the future. Like all other peoples, however, the Babylonians were strangely inconsistent in their conceptions of what happened to the dead. The corpse was preserved to a certain extent, by means of milk, honey, oil and salt.<sup>3</sup> But there was nothing to compare with the exceedingly elaborate customs of the Egyptians in this respect. Drinking water and food for the dead man were buried with him, and afterwards placed upon his tomb. The supply of water for the dead was of great importance, and, just as English cemeteries have water provided to be used for the flowers that are placed on graves, so, apparently, Babylonian cemeteries were equipped with cisterns from which water could be obtained to pour out libations for the dead. Indeed there was a special class of priests whose duty it was to perform the libation ceremonies for the spirits of the departed, and who were known as the *nak me*, or “water pourers.” To see that the offerings of food and libations were properly attended to was the duty of the dead man’s relatives. The fate of the dead was in any

<sup>1</sup> Job 7<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Eccles. 3<sup>20</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Jeremias, *Hölle und Paradies*, p. 9.

case unhappy ; the most that could be done for them was, by giving them decent burial and remembering the offerings, to secure for them such peace and comfort as was possible in their miserable condition. This is admirably illustrated in the closing lines of the Gilgamesh Epic. Gilgamesh, desiring anxiously to know how it fares with his old companion Enkidu in the world of the dead, implores Ellil to summon the spirit of Enkidu from its abiding-place. Ellil declines, and so also does Sin, who is next approached. Ea, always the friend of man, is more graciously disposed, and commands Nergal, the god of the underworld, to open a cleft in the earth that Enkidu's spirit may hold converse with Gilgamesh. "Saw you," asks the hero, "the man who died in battle?" Such a one, Enkidu answers, "rests on a couch and drinks clean water. His father and his mother raise his head, and his wife bends over him." "Saw you him whose body was left unburied on the battle-field?" "I saw him," is the answer, "his shade finds no rest on the earth." "Saw you him whose shade has none to care for it?" "Him I saw, the bits left over in the pot, what is thrown on the street as refuse, are his food." So the greatest indignity that could be inflicted upon a man was to deprive him of seemly burial. The curse of the Assyrian kings upon the man who should deface the inscriptions was "may his corpse be cast out and receive no burial." So, too, in a deed defining the boundaries of land the curse pronounced upon the man who removes the landmark is, "May Ninib, lord of

landmarks, rob him of his son, his libation-pourer ! ” And when a victorious warrior wished to punish his conquered foes with the utmost brutality he would slay them under such circumstances that they could have no proper burial. Sometimes this spirit of ferocity was carried so far that the tombs of the ancestors of a conquered people were despoiled, and the bones of the dead scattered.

If a pious regard for the dead did not suffice to persuade his relatives to carry out their duties in this matter another motive came into play ; because, with characteristic inconsistency, it was supposed that the spirits of the dead had power to return to earth and plague those who neglected their duties, or against whom they had some grievance. If Rogers is right in the view<sup>1</sup> he takes as to the meaning of the closing lines of the “ Psalm of Innocence ” such spirits had power to bless as well as to torment.

More detailed and picturesque descriptions of the underworld are met with in the myths. In the popular religion of an early period it was supposed that the ruler of the underworld was a goddess, Erishkigal, whose name means, “ Queen of the underworld ” In the official pantheon the ruler of the underworld was Nergal. An attempt to harmonize these two points of view is found in the myth of Nergal and Erishkigal, which we know from fragments discovered at Tell-el-Amarna. In this is related how Nergal descended from the upper world to Arallu, accompanied by a body-guard of

<sup>1</sup> See p. 91<sup>2</sup>.

fourteen plague demons. Arallu appears to be represented as an inner court, where the Queen sits enthroned, surrounded by fourteen concentric walls. At the gate of each of these walls Nergal stations one of his attendant demons. Entering the inmost enclosure he cuts down Namtar—a plague demon who acts as Erishkigal's messenger—and seizes Erishkigal herself by the hair, dragging down her head as though he would decapitate her. She pleads with him, and offers to give him her hand and share with him her dominion—“Thou shalt be lord and I will be lady.” Nergal accepts the offer and in this way the view of the popular religion is made to harmonize with the official view.

Very similar is the picture drawn in the story of Ishtar's descent into Arallu, which is a nature myth, symbolizing the gradual passing of summer into winter, and the return of spring. Ishtar, the goddess of fertility, descends into the “Land of No-return.” At the entrance, whose door and bolt are covered with dust, she demands admission of the porter, threatening to destroy the gate if it is not opened. Further, she will release the dead so that they shall outnumber the living on the earth. The porter bears her message to Erishkigal, who bids him open the gate, “and do unto her according to the ancient custom.” The watchman opens the gate, and as he admits Ishtar removes the crown from her head. She passes successively through seven gates—not fourteen, as did Nergal—and at each gate some ornament or

portion of her clothing is removed, until, when she enters the presence of Erishkigal, she is quite naked. To this series of symbolic actions Job's utterance, " Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither," has been compared. A more likely matter for comparison with Job's words is the Babylonian custom of burying the corpse naked. She is received as a most unwelcome guest. In the end Ea sends a messenger demanding Ishtar's return, and most unwillingly Erishkigal suffers her to depart. Ishtar is sprinkled with " the water of life," and as she passes through each gate is reinvested with the clothing or ornament of which she had previously been deprived. So that in both these myths the dominant conception of the underworld is that of a closely guarded prison-house.

While it was thus possible for gods to pass into the underworld and return, there is but one case of a mortal attaining eternal life recorded in the myths, that of Ut-napishtim and his wife, the survivors of the Deluge. Gilgamesh was so stricken, with the fear of death after he had seen Enkidu die that he determined to seek out Ut-napishtim, to learn the secret of eternal life. After many perilous adventures he comes to the fortress of the goddess Siduri-Sabitu and tells her his story.

" I was horribly afraid of death \* \* therefore do I travel this long journey through the land. \* \* \* Enkidu, my friend, hath become like the dust, and as for me, shall not I lie down even as he hath lain down, never to rise again ? "

The goddess, telling him that his task is utterly hopeless, refers him to the boatman, Ur-Shanabi. The latter conveys him safely over the waters of death into the presence of Ut-napishtim. Ut-napishtim cannot hold out hope. Mammitum,<sup>1</sup> the arranger of destinies, together with the Anunnaki, has settled the matter of life and death for men, and no man can discover the day of his death. After relating to Gilgamesh the story of the deluge, Ut-napishtim does tell him of the wonderful plant<sup>2</sup> that makes old men young again. Gilgamesh secures some of the plant, only to have it swallowed by a serpent, and returns in the end with his quest unfulfilled.<sup>3</sup>

This experience really sums up the Babylonian attitude to the idea of eternal life : man may vainly dream about it, but if so great a hero as Gilgamesh failed in his effort after it ordinary men will be well advised to dismiss the problem from their minds. The true solution of the problem is to heed the advice which, in another variant of the Epic, Sabitu gave to Gilgamesh :

“ Gilgamesh, whither runnest thou ?  
 The life that thou seekest thou wilt never find.  
 When the gods created mankind  
 They assigned death as the fate of mankind ;  
 Life they retained as their own prerogative.  
 As for thee, Gilgamesh, fill thy belly,  
 Rejoice day and night,  
 Every day make a feast,  
 Day and night be joyful and content.

<sup>1</sup> A goddess of the underworld.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 187f.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Frazer, FLOT, I, pp. 49-51.

Let thy garments be clean.  
 Let thy head be washed, wash thee with water.  
 Look (lovingly) upon the little child that clings to thy hand.  
 Be happy with thy wife in thy bosom."

A disappointing solution, but exactly the solution we find in Eccles. 9<sup>7-10</sup>, which might almost have been borrowed from it :

" Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy,  
 And drink thy wine with a merry heart ;  
 For God hath already accepted thy works.  
 Let thy garments be always white,  
 And let not thy head lack ointment.  
 Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest.

\* \* \* \* \*

For that is thy portion in life.

\* \* \* \* \*

For there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom,  
 In Sheol, whither thou goest."

Nor does the fact that kings were deified after death really affect this conclusion. They, too, went to the land of No-return. Their divinity was a political measure,<sup>1</sup> and was not supposed to affect their life in the underworld. Jeremias has contended<sup>2</sup> that the myths which related the return of Ishtar and Tammuz from the underworld diffused widely the idea that such deliverance was possible. He lays stress on the epithet " raiser of the dead," which is often attached to the names of deities—once at least, even to the name of Nergal. It is very doubtful whether the argument

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Jastrow, *Belief*, p. 356.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Jeremias, *Hölle und Paradies*, pp. 21-23.

will bear the weight that Jeremias puts upon it. When it is said that Shamash "makes the dead live," or that "Nabu lengthens the days of life and raises the dead," nothing more seems to be meant than that by the interposition of these deities the sick man who is virtually dead obtains a renewed lease of life. Essentially between the Hebrew and Babylonian ideas as to the state of the dead there is no difference, save in the not unimportant point that the Hebrews banished the many gods of polytheism not only from the heavens, but also from Sheol.

### § 5. PROPHECY ?

Do we find in Babylonia anything that can be regarded as corresponding to Hebrew prophecy? We have seen that divination and the giving of oracles played a very important part in Babylonian religion: but these are not the same thing as Hebrew prophecy. From the pages of the Old Testament it may be deduced that such things were resorted to in Israel, but the representatives of the higher religion were bitterly opposed to them. Sayce in his Gifford Lectures said that the *ashipu* from some points of view resembled the Israelitish prophet. But the *ashipu* differs from such men as Amos and Isaiah in that he is definitely a member of the priestly body, and is closely associated with the magician and necromancer. Condamin rightly says<sup>1</sup> that the *baru*, or diviner, is "the nearest approach that the Babylonian

<sup>1</sup> Condamin, *Babylone et la Bible*, col. 373. *Dictionnaire Apologétique*. Cf. also his article, *Prophétisme Israélite*.

religion offers to the Hebrew prophet, and between these there is a great gulf fixed.

Winckler and others have quoted a seventh century document in which the writer says :

"I, the servant, the prophet of the king,  
my lord, utter these prophecies for the king  
my lord. May the gods \* \* \* hear these  
prophecies \* \* \* enlarge them and fulfil  
them. Who can help loving so gracious a  
lord ! \* \* "1

Winckler actually finds here a Babylonian-Assyrian counterpart of Jeremiah ! Apart from the fact that the word translated "prophet" simply means a member of a particular class of priests, and that the word rendered "prophecies" from the context obviously means rather prayers, who could imagine Jeremiah describing himself as the servant (literally "dog") of the king, or speaking such unctuous flattery ? Direct evidence being unavailable, an attempt has been made to prove the existence of prophecy in Babylonia from Egyptian parallels. A number of Egyptian texts<sup>2</sup> have been brought forward to show that Egypt possessed a fully developed scheme of messianic prophecy. The oldest<sup>3</sup> of these goes back to c. 2000 B.C., but some are very late texts. Several eminent scholars agree that in these documents we have the essential features of the eschatological scheme, the promise

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Jeremias, *Handbuch*, p. 226.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Gressmann, TuB, I, pp. 204-209.

<sup>3</sup> A complete translation is given by Gardiner in JEA, Vol. I, Part 2.

that a time of catastrophe shall be followed by a deliverance under a messianic king and a time of felicity.<sup>1</sup> It is even argued that Old Testament prophecy is directly influenced by these Egyptian sources. Then the further step is taken, and it is said that, although the evidence has not yet been recovered, no doubt similar eschatological prophecies were current in Babylonia. Even if we grant that the view taken of the Egyptian documents is correct—which is not universally agreed—and accept also the inference that what prevailed in Egypt must have prevailed also in Babylonia, all we arrive at is that throughout the Orient generally there were expectations that times of trouble would be followed by times of prosperity under a good king. This may well have been the case, and the belief may have formed part of the popular religion which confronted the prophets of Israel. But in so far as the prophets may have made use of popular ideas they entirely transformed them. Even Sellin, who holds a high estimate of the Egyptian evidence, insists that the whole emphasis of the Hebrew prophets is on the ethical and religious side of the eschatology, for which reason they many times actually reverse the popular ideas.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Meyer, *Die Israeliten und ihre Nachbarstämme*, pp. 451-455.

<sup>2</sup> Sellin, *Die alttestamentliche Religion im Rahmen der andern altorientalischen*, p. 41. Sellin afterwards rather modified his original attitude to the Egyptian evidence: he regards the Hebrew eschatology itself as rooted in the Mosaic religion, and therefore a native Hebrew product, which availed itself of ethnic imagery to express its own belief. Hölscher, *Die Propheten*, pp. 458-460, takes a still more unfavourable view as to the likelihood of Egyptian influence.

For the people the Day of Yahweh was a day of victory and joy. For Amos it was a day of gloom and darkness.

Another way of finding likeness between the prophets of Israel and their supposed Babylonian compeers is to disparage the former and so make the gulf less wide. This has been done most elaborately by Winckler in his attempt to show that the prophets of Israel were primarily political agents. Winckler's long discussion<sup>1</sup> is valuable for the way in which he develops the thesis that politics, internal and external, exercised a determining influence on the official attitude to religion from time to time. For the rulers the religion of Yahweh sometimes meant about as much as Protestantism did for a Henry of Navarre or a Henry VIII. But the attempt to show that the great prophets were first and foremost diplomatic agents of their own monarchs, or sometimes of alien powers, seems the limit of perversity. Thus Amos is supposed to go to Israel as the agent of Ahaz with the chief purpose of stirring up the people there against Pekah—since it suits his theory better Winckler prefers to re-date the ministry of Amos to the time when Pekah, not Jeroboam, was on the throne of Israel—and to promote a movement in favour of union with Judah. That any one reading the words of Amos could set him down as a political agitator is proof of some lack in ability to understand evidence. If Winckler so misjudges the prophets whom we may read, how shall we trust his sense

<sup>1</sup> Winckler, GI, I, pp. 78-113.

of the values of evidence when he deals with the astral religion he imagines for us? That the prophets did take a keen interest in social conditions and imperial politics is true. They were at times the advisers of the king in matters of foreign policy, and had their advice been more often taken it had been better for the nation. But their political activity was the consequence of their religious and moral convictions, not the chief thing in their lives. They were the agents, not of the kings in Jerusalem, Samaria, or Nineveh, but of Yahweh.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On the whole question as to the possible connection between Egyptian prophecy and Hebrew prophecy, cf. Peake, *The Roots of Hebrew Prophecy and Jewish Apocalyptic* (1923), which is reprinted in the *Holborn Review*, January and April, 1924, and deals with all the recent discussions of the subject. The essay contains full references to the literature.

## CHAPTER V.

### The Origins of Hebrew Monotheism.

IT is universally agreed that the supreme glory of Old Testament religion, and the abiding legacy which it bequeathed to succeeding generations, is its ethical monotheism. When, however, we begin to inquire into the sources of that monotheism, we find ourselves confronted by a problem difficult of treatment, and for which varying solutions have been propounded. Some would trace the monotheism to a Babylonian, others to an Egyptian, origin ; while the traditional solution was, of course, that this great truth was revealed in the beginning to our first parents, and that the subsequent ages of darkness are to be regarded as times of degradation and corruption. This last view, despite the fact that it seems to be essentially that of so great a scholar as Lagrange, could scarcely have arisen to-day, and would, we imagine, hardly be defended had it not been traditional. Our fuller understanding of the ways in which the Old Testament came into being, and of the history of mankind, makes it impossible for us to accept this simple solution. The way in which God has led the stumbling feet of humanity

along the path towards the goal of every other science makes it antecedently probable that in theology, too, man started at the beginning rather than at the end. But even so we are not disposed to admit without examination those claims which would transfer this crowning glory to the Babylonians or Egyptians.

Whatever else may be doubtful, we are on firm ground when we assert that the theology of the great prophets from the time of Amos onwards is ethical monotheism, though in some cases we may doubt whether this was consciously held as a speculative doctrine. Monotheism has its philosophical, and its religious side.<sup>1</sup> With the former many of the prophets did not very much concern themselves. If we turn to Amos, leaving out of account the great doxological passages, 4<sup>13</sup>, 5<sup>8</sup>, since, partly because of their affinities with the utterances of Deutero-Isaiah, many regard them as interpolations, we cannot read a passage such as 9<sup>1-7</sup> without feeling that Amos is a monotheist. A god who can search heaven, earth, and Sheol, who transports and transplants the nations, can have no rival claimant to his throne. For Isaiah Yahweh is the master of history, the potter in whose hands all men are but as clay (29<sup>15f.</sup>). Assyria is but a tool in his hands (7<sup>20</sup>, 10<sup>5</sup>).

<sup>1</sup> If it should be urged that a monotheism which is concerned almost exclusively with religion should rather be called monolatry—the exclusive worship of one god—we venture to dissent. We would confine the term monolatry to that type of religion which, while definitely recognizing the existence of other gods, centres itself entirely upon one.

Similarly Jeremiah finds in Nebuchadnezzar the mere agent of Yahweh's plans (25<sup>3-11</sup>). It may indeed be questioned whether the fact that Yahweh is represented as employing the nations as the instruments of his purpose would, *in itself*, be sufficient to prove monotheism in the full sense. The Cylinder of Cyrus,<sup>1</sup> which celebrates the triumph of Cyrus over Babylon, contains these words :

"Marduk sought out a righteous prince, after his own heart, whom he might take by the hand ; Cyrus he called by his name and proclaimed him ruler of all the world. The land of Kutu he brought low before his feet \* \* \* and regarded his good deeds and righteous heart with joy. He commanded him to go to his city, Babylon, \* \* and went like a friend and helper at his side."

The very language of this inscription is strikingly reminiscent of the approximately contemporaneous passage Isa. 41<sup>2f2</sup>. If we are to assert that by itself belief in the power of one's god to dispose of other nations suffices to prove monotheism, we must allow that the language of this inscription proves its author—ultimately, no doubt, Cyrus himself—to be a monotheist, for whom Marduk holds the place which in the case of the prophets is taken

<sup>1</sup> B.M. 12049. The inscription is partly translated in King's *First Steps in Assyrian*, pp. 103ff. Jeremias, MS., pp. 43ff., seems almost to suppose that there is much more than accidental resemblance between the Cylinder and Old Testament utterances.

<sup>2</sup> Kittel, *Cyrus und Deuterojesaja*, ZAW, 1898, argued that the language in Isaiah may have been modelled on official Babylonian phraseology.

by Yahweh. But there is a crucial difference. In the very same inscription Cyrus recognizes the existence of other gods :

“ I installed the gods of Sumer and Akkad in their own shrines. \* \* \* \* May all the gods whom I have brought into their own cities pray daily to Bel and Nabu for the lengthening of my days \* \* \* and say unto Marduk, my lord, ‘ May Cyrus, the king, who fears thee, and Cambyses his son ’ \* \* (broken).”

But in the case of the prophets the assertion of Yahweh’s power over the nations is not qualified by the recognition of other deities as real, though subordinate, powers. Moreover the whole religious tone of the background against which these striking utterances are set justifies us in regarding them as having a very much more profound meaning than we can attribute to the outwardly very similar statement of Cyrus.

In the case of Jeremiah, even if we leave upon one side a passage such as 16<sup>19f.</sup>, which may or may not be the prophet’s own, we are entitled to take into consideration his development of the conception that religion is a matter for the individual. As Causse has well said,<sup>1</sup> “ Religious individualism was the final stage of evolution towards universalist monotheism.” So that we may accept without hesitation Peake’s summary<sup>2</sup> of the prophet’s position : “ Whether we should speak of

<sup>1</sup> Causse, PIRO, p. 193.

<sup>2</sup> Peake, *Jeremiah*, CB, I, p. 32.

Jeremiah as a speculative monotheist may be doubted. But practically his position was indistinguishable from monotheism." When we come to Deutero-Isaiah we have the most absolute assertion of the monotheistic standpoint. Upon the gods and their images alike he pours the most withering scorn. For him Yahweh is God and has neither peer nor subordinate. "Thus saith Yahweh: I am the first and I am the last; and beside me there is no god," 44<sup>6</sup>. "I am the Lord: and there is none else," 47<sup>18</sup>. This phrase and its equivalents appear again and again. Yahwism is now indistinguishable from pure monotheism. To bring further evidence from the prophetic and later literature is surely superfluous.

Are we then to think of the prophets as creators of Israel's ethical monotheism, or can we trace it back to an earlier stage in the history? The attempt to solve this problem is made more hazardous by the fact that the documents of the Old Testament as they have come down to us are a compilation largely under prophetic influence. We find that in some matters quite clearly the compilers have reflected later conditions back into earlier times when they could not possibly have prevailed, as, for example, in the case of some of the elaborate ritual recorded of the Mosaic period. We have, then, to examine carefully the pictures of religion in the earlier times, for it is not impossible that brighter colours may have been added by the artist to canvasses that had come down to him in a rather faded condition.

The religion of the Abrahamic period is represented as comparatively lofty. The patriarchs are depicted as worshipping "God" rather than gods. Are we to take the orthodox critical view that this is untrue to historic probabilities, or, with Baentsch,<sup>1</sup> to find in the representation a "good old tradition"? It may still be regarded as the view of the majority of critical scholars that Israel's religion passed gradually from an elementary stage of animism, totemism, and fetichism, through the stage of the tribal deity, to the stage represented by the religion of the prophets; and that this final stage was reached only under the influence of the great prophets. From this conclusion there are now signs of revolt. Some critics, such as Gressmann and Sellin, believe that it has been based too restrictedly upon a literary analysis which has not taken sufficient cognizance of the facts of the history, and has not allowed adequately for the existence contemporaneously in a nation of forms of religion which are widely separated from one another in stage of development. With this revolt we have much sympathy. The accepted view took its shape under the dominating influence of the doctrine of evolution, at a time when the tendency was to think of evolution as taking place almost exclusively by means of small variations. Since then it has been recognized that sudden springs, and also retrogressions, have played a much more prominent part in the scheme of evolution than had been allotted them by the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Baentsch AM, p. 56.

earlier theorists. However that may be, the growth of religion is not as the light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. There are sometimes clouds upon its horizon ; sometimes sudden accesses of brilliant light. At widely separated intervals there may arise a Paul, a Luther, a Wesley, whose inspiration is as a spark which kindles religion to an intenser heat ; the intervals between are frequently times when the fire dies down. But the fire caused by the spark is not absolutely quenched. The idea has been finely expressed by Baentsch ; a lofty idea is never utterly lost, “it is a spark glowing in the ashes, which, when the breath of God blows strongly upon it, can blaze into a bright flame.”<sup>1</sup> In a science like astronomy advances are for the most part not made by a gradual progressive movement : they proceed from great personalities such as Copernicus or Newton. The same truth applies even more to religion, and we are convinced that Lagrange is right when he says<sup>2</sup> that it is impossible to find a single historical case of monotheism issuing from polytheism, if we may add the qualifying clause “by a process of gradual refinement.” Great personalities account for the fact that Yahweh becomes the sole God of an ethical monotheism, whereas Chemosh never passes beyond the limits of a tribal deity.

Much that we find in the writings of the prophets seems to suggest that they are making an appeal

<sup>1</sup> Baentsch, AM, p. 77.

<sup>2</sup> Lagrange, *Études*, p. 24.

for recovery from declension: more than once they recall a past time that was free from some things that offend them in the present.<sup>1</sup> They certainly on the whole do not speak as if they had recently made the discovery that there was but one God. If now we look back into the history we find two outstanding personalities about whom we may do well to inquire as to whether their religion was approximately monotheistic—Elijah and Moses. Elijah is an embodiment of the “Jealousy” of Yahweh. For him it is a choice between Yahweh and Baal. In most oriental religions it is a perfectly natural thing to combine two gods. A new god can easily be worked into a pantheon. Indeed there were times in the history of Israel when Yahweh himself had to endure the presence of other deities in his temples. But the true Yahwism took very unkindly to these forced alliances, and the intolerance of Elijah makes him in this respect its most splendid representative. Causse goes so far as to say<sup>2</sup> that universalist monotheism began at Carmel, as the result not indeed of elaborate philosophical speculation, but rather of the struggle for national conservation, the violent reaction against syncretism. Yet it may be an exaggeration to speak of Elijah as a monotheist in the full sense of the word. Logically his position must have developed into one of theoretical monotheism. But the men of old time were wont,

<sup>1</sup> “The prophets preached a return to the past. They considered themselves restorers and reformers.” Causse PIRO, p. 69.

<sup>2</sup> Causse, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

like their modern successors, sometimes to stop short of carrying out their premisses to logical conclusions ; and Elijah seems never to have taken the step that would have made his monotheism complete. His attainment of the full conception was hindered by his failure to cast his eyes beyond the boundaries of nationalism. Volz goes further than this in his estimate of Elijah's monotheism, taking the view that he did really achieve a pure monotheism, but that this is concealed from us because the portrait we have of him in the popular stories has coarsened some of his finer features.<sup>1</sup> We must recognize, however, that some even of the great writing prophets never completely freed themselves from the shackles of nationalism. It cannot be too strongly asserted that the monotheism characteristic of Israel has its foundation not so much in logical argument as in profound religious experience. Nor is this feature peculiar to Israel, for "the problems both about 'God' and about 'the gods' have everywhere been inherited by the philosophers from religions whose origins antedated their philosophy."<sup>2</sup>

And now let us turn our eyes further back, to the great figure of Moses. True, we find it difficult to recover the exact historical situation in which the founder of Israel's unity worked. All our Biblical records are in their present form so much later than the events that an element of uncertainty cannot be eliminated. Winckler at times, indeed, would persuade, we had almost said would com-

<sup>1</sup> Volz, *Mose*, p. 36.   <sup>2</sup> Royce, Article *Monotheism*, ERE.

mand, us to believe that the Moses of the Old Testament is not an historical figure.<sup>1</sup> But, apart from the fact that the increase of historical knowledge in recent years has tended generally to show that there is more history in ancient traditions than the nineteenth century was willing to concede, "historical and ethical religions always go back to an historical person as their founder. Only a person can interpret an historical event so as to make it the origin of a new religious movement; only a powerfully spiritual person can give such a movement an ethical impress."<sup>2</sup>

The real source of Hebrew monotheism we should probably find, then, in the religious experience of Moses which underlies the tradition preserved in Exod. 3, an experience that produced in him an attitude towards the Divine from which monotheism follows as an inevitable consequence, though the end may be delayed. This may seem to leave us with a rather vague source, but it is impossible to reproduce a religious experience satisfactorily in words. The general position appears to be confirmed by the unanimous voice of the national tradition, which speaks consistently of Moses as the real founder alike of the commonwealth and of the

<sup>1</sup> Cf., too, Eduard Meyer, *Die Israeliten und ihre Nachbarstämme*, p. 451<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Baentsch, AM, pp. 65f. Several monographs have recently appeared all emphatically affirming his existence. Cf. Gressmann, *Mose und seine Zeit* (1913); Beer, *Mose* (1908); Volz, *Mose* (1907); Caspari, *Neuere Versuche geschichtswissenschaftliche Vergewisserung über Mose* ZAW, 1924, pp. 297-313; Sellin, *Mose und seine Bedeutung für die israelitisch-jüdische Religionsgeschichte* (1922).

religion. At the same time the experience even of a great soul will create neither a state nor a religion unless it comes to an outward embodied expression. In this connection we associate ourselves with those recent critics who ascribe to Moses the kernel of the Decalogue, and perhaps even of the Book of the Covenant.<sup>1</sup> This is a question the answer to which is largely determined by subjective considerations, and while we admit that the difficulties in the way of accepting this position are serious we think they are not insuperable. So far as the Decalogue goes the greatest difficulties are raised by the commandments which deal with the prohibition of images, with the Sabbath, and with the coveting of one's neighbour's possessions. However, in our judgment, the prohibition of images by Moses does not seem an impossible hypothesis,<sup>2</sup> and the Sabbath, as, in its original form a full-moon festival, may well be pre-Mosaic, and as the festival *par excellence* of Yahweh will not improbably have been adopted with Yahweh, the national deity. The objection based on the ground that the last commandment in particular implies a settled people, whereas the Israelites at this time were nomads, has been robbed of some of the force it

<sup>1</sup> For recent work on the Decalogues of J and E cf. Cornill, *Zum Jahwistischen Dekalog* in *Studien Julius Wellhausen Gewidmet* (1914); Nowack, *Der Erste Dekalog* in *Abhandlungen von Baudissin überreicht* (1918); Schmidt, H., *Mose und der Dekalog in Ευχαριστηρίῳ* (1923), pp. 78-119; Charles, *The Decalogue*; McFadyen, *Mosaic Origin of the Decalogue*, *Expositor*: February-May, July-September, 1916; Barnes, *Ten Treatises on the Ten Commandments*, *Expositor*: June, 1924.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Gressmann, *Mose*, p. 475.

once had. Recent discovery all goes to show that civilization was much more advanced in the Mosaic time than we had earlier known, even in Canaan. Tribes dwelling on the borders of the settled country can hardly have remained untouched by civilizing influences. Nor were the tribes of the desert quite the elementary peoples we have been wont to imagine. They were at most semi-nomadic. George Adam Smith, it is true, objects to the use of "semi-nomadic" or "semi-nomad," on the ground that his actual experience of life in the desert frontiers of Syria has shown him that the transition from the nomad and pastoral forms of life to the settled and agricultural is "a process infinitely more gradual and complex than that academic division into nomadic and semi-nomadic . . . . which is the fashion with some writers at the present day." (*The Early Poetry of Israel*, pp. 29f.) While we retain the terms as a matter of convenience this qualification should be remembered. Eerdmans's argument<sup>1</sup> that even the patriarchs are represented as semi-nomads rather than as nomads seems to us convincing. The traditions as to the Qadesh period, too, imply semi-settled conditions. Another argument that is advanced against our position is that the subsequent history, say of the Judges period, does not confirm it. But the failure at a subsequent period to accord with earlier traditions may be rather evidence of a decline from those traditions than

<sup>1</sup> Eerdmans, *Alttestamentliche Studien*. II, pp. 38-48.

proof of their baselessness.<sup>1</sup> We are not in the least concerned to argue that the national religion maintained itself at the level of the Mosaic experience. Popular Yahwism was far from being monotheistic. Even Moses himself, in his attempt to express his experience, was limited by his endeavour to embody it within the bounds of nationality. How easy for men of more ordinary stature to fail even to maintain the standard he had set!

Baentsch has advanced the theory that those parts of Gen. 2-11 in which Yahweh is represented as God of the universe go back to beliefs that prevailed in the Orient centuries before Israel became a nation in Canaan, to a kind of speculative monotheism which must at the latest have become known to Israel at that crisis of its history.<sup>2</sup> From that point there would run side by side in the national history two streams of thought, in one of which Yahweh was regarded as a world-deity, while in the other he was looked upon as exclusively a national deity: the latter of these streams is a practical monotheism which is imperfect in that it has not transcended national limitations; the former is largely speculative, and less intense, though wider in scope, and interests a comparatively small minority. Under the influence of national disasters, which enlarged the nation's outlook by painful experience, the two streams become united

<sup>1</sup> The argument that the prohibition of images cannot have been Mosaic, because it was ignored by worshippers of Yahweh, may perhaps be countered along these lines.

<sup>2</sup> See Baentsch, AM, pp. 99-101.

in the great prophets, their absolute fusion being reached by Deutero-Isaiah. Baentsch contends that Moses himself was acquainted with the old oriental speculative monotheism. If so, it seems to us rather surprising that he should not himself have worked it into a unity with his religious experience. On this point Baentsch seems to be none too clear, but presumably would reply that Moses failed to achieve this result because he was so much occupied with the idea of the nation. In that case, however, it is rather difficult to see the point of his elaborate argument that Moses was familiar with this speculative monotheism. Volz feels that Baentsch in his conclusions has hardly done justice to his premisses.<sup>1</sup> He, too, agrees that the essence of monotheism in Israel may be dated back to Moses; and also that its prime source is to be discovered in the religious experience of the founder. But he lays stress for the proof of this not on any preparation for monotheism in the speculative teachings of the ancient East, but rather on an especially lofty strain of Yahweh-worship which he traces through the pre-prophetic period—flowing, as he puts it, like the Gulf Stream, through an ocean of less lofty religion, its source being the personality of Moses.<sup>2</sup>

Whether there actually existed a speculative monotheism outside Israel and earlier than the time of Moses is an important question to which we must give some attention. For it must be

<sup>1</sup> Volz, *Mose*, pp. 77f.

<sup>2</sup> Volz, *Mose*, p. 65.

allowed that our own view, namely, that Israel's monotheism is really to be traced back to the religious experience of Moses, will hardly seem convincing to an historian who starts with the assumption that the idea of a living God revealing himself to and through human personalities is absurd. Whereas, on the other hand, we shall not be in the least disturbed if the assertion that Israel's monotheism is neither unique nor original should be proved. To quote the fine words of Causse : "Whether it comes from Babylon, Thebes, or Jerusalem, truth is no less beautiful. And if it be demonstrated that the priests of Amen Ra or of Bel Marduk were before the shepherds of Midian and the inspired ones of Israel in the discovery of the religion of the spirit, and that they are the true spiritual pioneers of humanity, that will not take from the old pages of the Bible any of their power or splendour."<sup>1</sup>

If of old time the Spirit of God spake in the tongue of "the dwellers in Mesopotamia \* \* and in Egypt," as later on the day of Pentecost, we will rejoice to discover that revelation is a greater wonder than we had hitherto supposed. We have, at any rate, moved very far from the superb generalization of Renan, who found in monotheism the characteristic feature of Semitic religion generally. To quote his own words : "The Semitic genius consists in monotheism, the absence of philosophic and scientific culture, an almost complete absence of curiosity and of feeling for

<sup>1</sup> Causse, PIRO, p. 10.

fine shades of meaning.”<sup>1</sup> Even Baudissin’s less sweeping proposition<sup>2</sup> that the characteristic of Semitic religions is possibly a clearer recognition of the unity of the divine, will be seriously disputed.

Philological arguments have been brought forward to demonstrate the existence of a monotheism older than Moses. Lagrange has attempted to show that in the generic name for god (Hebrew =’*el*, Assyrian, *ilu*) we have evidence of a primitive Semitic monotheism; in effect that the word is primitively a proper name =*God*, not a common noun =*god*. He quotes from Gen. 46<sup>3</sup> the phrase, “ ’*el*, the God of thy fathers” : this would be more impressive as a proof that ’*el* is a proper name had not the actual Hebrew been *hā ’el*; for the use of the article, which Lagrange ignores, weakens his argument. He further points out that in compound proper names ’*el* may replace *Yah*, as, for example, in *Abiel* = *Abiyah*. Admitting that among the Phœnicians the name itself is appellative, he contends that even there it seems, when used as an element in compound names, itself to be a proper name. He quotes Damascius, Servius, and Philo of Byblus, for the statement that the Phœnicians call Kronos or Sol ’*El*. From Babylonia he adduces the proper name *Shumma-ilu-la-ilia* (=if God is not my God), which, he says, is senseless unless the first *ilu* is a proper name.<sup>3</sup> Baentsch quotes<sup>4</sup> ’*El* as a proper name of a deity from the Aramaic inscriptions of

<sup>1</sup> Renan, *Histoire des langues sémitiques*, I, chapter I.

<sup>2</sup> ZDMG, 1903, p. 836.      <sup>3</sup> Cf. *Études*, pp. 70-83.

<sup>4</sup> Baentsch, AM, pp. 39f.

Sendschirli ; and from an Assyrian-Aramaic bilingual inscription the proper name Sarsariel ( = 'El is king of kings).

It may readily be conceded that '*el*' when used in certain contexts has really the force of a proper name, just as *Mother* may have at the beginning of an Englishman's letter ; but this will not in itself establish the existence of a primitive proper name '*El*'.

As to the vexed question of the etymology of '*el*', Lagrange seems inclined to accept a theory originally propounded by La Place,<sup>1</sup> which explains the words in connection with a root '*ly*, '*l* (*h*) = stretch out to' and so finds in '*el*' the goal towards which the desires and efforts of men turn. Baentsch appears to approve of this theory, and, to meet the obvious objection that it postulates a conception far too metaphysical for primitive men, he proposes alternatively "the one unto whom men turn to worship, to pray, to seek protection." Hommel connects '*el*' with the preposition '*el*' (=unto), and gives it the meaning "place of refuge." Zimmern interprets as *Weltrichtung*, understanding thereby the North Pole as the seat of the supreme god Anu. Delitzsch has also committed himself to a theory practically identical with this—'*El*' is a proper name meaning "the Goal, the Being to whom as to a goal the eyes of men looking heavenward are turned."<sup>2</sup> His way of meeting the objection that this is too abstract for a primitive word is to point to the fact that

the Babylonian symbol for *ilu* is the sign also for heaven, and say that the primary meaning is, "The point at which the eye aims, such as the sun or the sky."<sup>1</sup>

All this etymologizing seems to be very precarious. It is hard to believe that 'ēl=God, a proper name, and 'ēl=unto, a preposition, are really one word; further, as Daiches remarked long ago, "If the idea of *ilu* had arisen from the preposition 'ēl it is very remarkable that in Assyrian and Babylonian no preposition 'ēl exists." Probably the word 'ēl is one of those primitive words beyond the reach of etymological explanations, in short, of completely obscure origin.

Delitzsch appeals further<sup>2</sup> for proof of a certain type of monotheism to proper names of the Hammurabi period compounded with *ilu*, such as *Ilu-ittia*=God is with me, *Ilu-abi*=God is my father. But here again *ilu* need mean no more than the special deity worshipped by the bestower of the name. This is the view of Gunkel, Oettli, Bezold, König, and Condamin, among others. The two first-mentioned most aptly quote<sup>3</sup> Greek names such as Theopompos, Theodosios, Theoxenos, which would certainly not be held to prove that among the Greeks Theos was a proper name. Ranke supports Delitzsch, not very decidedly, and Jeremias, who would have welcomed the theory with enthusiasm, had he believed it true, says

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 127.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 70.

<sup>3</sup> Gunkel, *Israel und Babylonien*, p. 29. Oettli, *Der Kampf um Bibel und Babel*, p. 27.

quite definitely, "I do not believe that *ilu* was ever an independent divine name."<sup>1</sup>

Some bold assertions that a monotheistic religion existed in Egypt have been put forward. Undoubtedly there are passages in the Egyptian records which seem at first sight to give colour to the idea that the loftiest spirits in Egypt attained at least to glimpses of the truth. A. H. Gardiner quotes,<sup>2</sup> as perhaps the earliest, and certainly one of the most remarkable, of these supposedly monotheistic passages a Petersburg papyrus. He seems inclined to assign it to the "end of the reign of Antef": more generally he describes it as a "work of Herakleopolitan date."<sup>3</sup>

"Command thou (?) men, the flocks of God.

He made heaven and earth at their desire.  
He checked the greed of the waters, and made  
the air to give life to their nostrils. They  
are his own images proceeding from his flesh.  
He arises in heaven at their desire. He made  
for them grass and cattle, fowl and fish to  
nourish them. He slew his enemies and  
destroyed his own children because of their  
plots in making rebellion. He maketh the  
dawn at their desire. He sails by (?) in order  
to see them. He has raised a shrine behind  
them. When they weep, he heareth. He  
made for them rulers in the egg, a supporter (?)  
to support (?) the back of the weak. He

<sup>1</sup> Jeremias, *Handbuch*, p. 229.      <sup>2</sup> See JEA, Vol. I, Part I.

<sup>3</sup> CAH gives 2375 B.C. as the date of Antef I, and c. 2500-2300 (?) for the more general date.

made for them magic as weapons to ward off (evil) events ; dreams (also) by night and by day. How hath he slain the froward of heart ? Even as a man smiteth his son for his brother's sake. For God knows every name."

The sentence "he arises in heaven," and the clear allusion to the familiar legend of the "Destruction of Men," make it certain that the deity referred to is the sun-god.

This, though striking, is hardly convincing ; for examples might be multiplied to show that the idea of a god being the creator of the earth and its fulness was often held, however illogically it may seem to us, side by side with a real belief in other gods. The same Egyptian tomb will sometimes be found to contain similar ascriptions of creative power to several different deities. The priests of Heliopolis regarded Ra as the creator. But nevertheless they proceeded to derive from him eight other gods to form an ennead. Brugsch's contention that the Egyptian religion was a kind of henotheistic pantheism, recognizing one supreme god, of whom all other gods are merely symbols or manifestations, is rejected by Maspero, Erman, and Naville, and out of favour with modern Egyptologists. Where one supreme god is recognized, other local deities are retained as subordinate members of his pantheon. Certainly the popular religion of Egypt was grossly polytheistic. The best that can be said for the existence of a monotheistic doctrine in Egypt is that, by the elevation

of one god to a monarchic position among the others, the priests arrived at a position which should logically have developed into a theoretical pantheism. But if it did so, "This pantheistic doctrine remained a piece of priestly wisdom in the possession of 'them who know,' and had no discoverable consequence in actual religion even for them."<sup>1</sup>

It is impossible to leave out of our survey what is often referred to as "the monotheistic reform" of Akhenaten, who ascended the throne—under the name of Amenhotep IV—c. 1375 B.C. The empire was at the highest point of its splendour. The triumphs of his predecessors had caused Amen, the god under whose auspices their successful campaigns had been fought, to become supreme among the gods of Egypt. Magnificent temples, richly endowed, had been built in his honour. His priests became powerful and had a large share in the direction of state policy. Amenhotep IV, however, displayed especial devotion to an old, but hitherto comparatively unimportant, god known as Aten, whose symbol was the disc of the sun. In Thebes, alike capital of the empire and chief centre of Amen worship, the king erected a temple to Aten, and the city itself was re-named "City of Aten's brightness." Presently he undertook the suppression of the old Amen worship throughout the land, and erased the name of Amen and those of the older gods from inscriptions. This was not mere vindictiveness : the name of

<sup>1</sup> Moore, *History of Religions*, Vol. I, p. 168.

a god was supposed in a very real way to represent, almost to be, his person. Even his father's name was mutilated in the cemetery in order to remove the objectionable "Amen," and the king changed his own name to "Akhenaten =Spirit of Aten. Very soon, however, the king decided to abandon Thebes for a new capital, which was laid out on soil never before built upon, about three hundred miles North of Thebes, up the Nile. This new capital, in which magnificent temples and palaces were reared, was named Akhetaten =Horizon of Aten. In the temples of Aten there was no image of the god. The immediate successor of Akhenaten, his eldest daughter's husband, reigned a brief time, and was followed by a second son-in-law, Tutankhaten (=living image of Aten). Under him the new capital was abandoned, Thebes restored to its old pre-eminence, and the old religion brought back again. The name of Amen was replaced in the inscriptions from which it had been erased, and the new king replaced Aten by Amen in his own name, thus becoming the now famous Tutankhamen. Recent excavations at Tell-el-Amarna, as the site of Akhenaten's capital is now known, show that the worship of the old gods was beginning to creep back even there before the abandonment of the city. Among other treasures recovered from the ruined city of Akhetaten is a magnificent hymn to Aten, composed by Akhenaten, which undoubtedly offers the nearest approximation<sup>I</sup> to monotheism that has yet been found in Egypt. The hymn praises Aten as the giver and nourisher

of life, human and divine. In language strikingly reminiscent of Psa. 104 the contrast between the busy life of earth when the sun is above the horizon and the hours of darkness is described. Aten has made the different races of different colours, and fixed their habitations, be they Syrians, Nubians, or Egyptians. Gressman draws attention<sup>1</sup> to the fact that the foreigners are mentioned before the Egyptians. Just as Aten has given the Nile for the watering of Egypt, so has he given the rain—the Nile of the heavens—to the far distant lands. Indeed the hymn is an expansion of the theme, “In Aten all things live and move and have their being.” Causse has urged<sup>2</sup> that the reform of Akhenaten was primarily political rather than religious. The king was more concerned to break the power of Amen’s priesthood, than to make a nearer approach to the true God. That this motive may have been mixed with the other is quite possible. The very complete reaction under his successors may perhaps be taken as evidence that at any rate Akhenaten’s opponents attributed to him political motives. But, as against Causse, surely religious bigotry would equally well account for the violent reaction; and further, the picture of Akhenaten presented to us in the Amarna letters, which shows him as an inefficient ruler, allowing his Syrian provinces to slip from his futile fingers when a slight effort might have saved

<sup>1</sup> Gressmann, TuB, I, p. 190<sup>6</sup>. Sethe, however, thinks the Egyptians are mentioned last by way of climax. Cf. Schäfer, *Die Religion und Kunst von El-Amarna*, p. 32<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Causse, PIRO, pp. 28of.

the situation, suggests that we should recognize in him rather the religious visionary than the astute politician.

It is perhaps impossible even now to pronounce dogmatically upon this much-controverted question. The most contradictory statements, even upon questions of fact, appear in the authorities. For example, Moore asserts<sup>1</sup> that Akhenaten effaced the names of the gods wherever they occurred in inscriptions, and treated the very word "gods" in the same fashion. Causse, on the other hand, asserts<sup>2</sup> that only the name of Amen was erased. Such divergences are partly accounted for by the fact that Akhenaten's movement was gradually developed. In its earlier stages Horus and other gods were retained, being represented, no doubt, as forms of Aten. In his early inscriptions the king calls the Aten, Ra Horus, and in later ones, Ra. Miss W. M. Crompton, of the Manchester Museum, has drawn my attention to the fact that Akhenaten's two youngest daughters were given names in which Ra is an element. Mercer has argued very decidedly<sup>3</sup> against the recognition of the reform as truly monotheistic. He lays stress on the fact that Akhenaten retained the royal title "Favourite of the Two Goddesses," and emphasizes the point that Akhenaten regarded himself as a god, the incarnation of the Aten, exactly as other Pharaohs proclaimed themselves to be divine. He had priests of his own cult, and

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, I, p. 182.

<sup>2</sup> Causse, PIRO, pp. 28of.

<sup>3</sup> In an article, JSOR, October, 1919.

was worshipped. So that Mercer's conclusion is that Akhenaten was by no means a monotheist, but rather a "clever and self-centred individual henotheist." Causse too, quotes<sup>1</sup> Maspero (*Histoire Ancienne*, II, p. 322) as having proved from the inscriptions at Karnak that Akhenaten worshipped other gods beside Aten. Peet, whose knowledge of the subject is first-hand, has dealt with the problem,<sup>2</sup> devoting special attention to Mercer's arguments. In his opinion the retention of the "Two Goddesses" title need no more prove the recognition of those goddesses than a Christian name need imply a Christian faith. Nor does he think the fact that Akhenaten regarded himself as an embodiment of Aten fatal to the argument that he was a monotheist, for in that case he doubts whether Christianity could be regarded in the strict sense as a monotheistic religion. His cautiously expressed verdict is that "it is hard to avoid the conclusion that what Akhenaten aimed at was a true monotheism." The discussions of Akhenaten's religious reform by Breasted and Peet in the *Cambridge Ancient History*, Vol. II, both estimate it more highly than the writer has been able to do. Both, too, insist on the existence of a certain amount of preparation for it under the king's predecessor. Breasted speaks of Akhenaten as "the most remarkable figure in earlier oriental history . . . a brave soul, undauntedly

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 281.

<sup>2</sup> In an article in the *Journal of the Manchester Egyptian and Oriental Society*, Vol. IX.

facing the momentum of immemorial tradition . . . not only the world's first idealist and the world's first *individual*, but also the earliest monotheist, and the first prophet of internationalism—the most remarkable figure of the Ancient World before the Hebrews.”<sup>1</sup> He admits, though, that Akhenaten, so far as our sources go, is not shown to have reached a very spiritual conception of the deity, or to have risen “from a discernment of the beneficence to a conception of the righteousness in the character of God, nor of His demand for this in the character of men.”<sup>2</sup> Peet’s verdict is that “the reformer undoubtedly aimed at monotheism, though the extreme conservatism of the country he ruled may have forced him to make some formal and unimportant concessions to polytheism.”<sup>3</sup>

Positively, it may be, the famous hymn makes no greater claims for Aten than do some of the earlier hymns for other creator-deities. But negatively it does mark a real advance by its omission of mythological traits. However highly we may rate the monotheism of the hymn, and despite the efforts Akhenaten made to popularize Aten worship, such an expression as :

“Thou art in my heart. None knoweth thee  
save thy son Akhenaten,”  
suggests that, as contrasted with Hebrew monotheism, it has an esoteric tinge.

For Babylonia, too, far-reaching monotheistic

<sup>1</sup> CAH, II, pp. 127f.

<sup>2</sup> CAH, II, p. 120.

<sup>3</sup> CAH, II, p. 206.

claims have been advanced. Hugo Radau<sup>1</sup> made the sweeping assertion that the Babylonian religion is purely monotheistic, and, more exactly, monotheistic trinitarianism. Apart from some speculative generalizations, such as those of the Pan-Babylonian school,<sup>2</sup> these claims are maintained largely on the strength of certain hymns and other documents that seem, at first sight, to elevate one deity to a position so lofty that logically the others become insignificant; and partly on the basis of certain documents in which one deity is equated to several others.

It is true that in most local pantheons there is one supreme god, generally the specific god of the city or state, as Marduk in Babylon. Other gods receive recognition, and their cults are maintained, but they are reduced to inferior positions, being no more than servants of the chief deity. These supreme deities have generally acquired astral or semi-astral characters, which makes it easy to invest them with cosmic functions. The most famous of the Babylonian hymns, that which most nearly approaches the hymn of Akhenaten, is one addressed to "Father Nannar." Nannar means "the Illuminator," and is a favourite title of the moon-god Sin. Its form shows that it was probably employed in the liturgical worship of Sin at his temple, Egish-shirgal, in Ur, the traditional home of Abraham. This temple has recently been excavated, and its

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Condamin, *Babylone et la Bible*, p. 368.

<sup>2</sup> For which see c. XII.

ruins show that it provided a splendid setting for the worship. The actual text of the hymn as we have it is of the time of Ashurbanipal, but obviously the original is many centuries older. From it we may quote :<sup>1</sup>

" Lord, ruler of the gods, who in heaven and earth alone  
is exalted !

Father Nannar \* \* ruler of the gods !

\* \* \* \* \*

Father Nannar, who has become absolute sovereign,  
ruler of the gods !

\* \* \* \* \*

Of thyself begotten \* \* \*

Merciful, gracious Father, who holds in his hand the life  
of the whole land

\* \* \* \* \*

whose knees grow not weary, who opens the path  
for the gods his brothers,

\* \* \* \* \*

In heaven, who is exalted ? Thou alone art exalted !

On earth, who is exalted ? Thou alone art exalted !

When thy word sounds forth in heaven, the Igigi<sup>2</sup> prostrate  
themselves.

When thy word sounds forth on earth, the Anunnaki<sup>3</sup>  
kiss the ground.

\* \* \* \* \*

Thy word brings forth truth and justice, that men may  
speak truth.

<sup>1</sup> Fuller translations in Gressmann, TuB, I, pp. 80f., Jastrow, *Religion*, pp. 303f., Causse, PIRO, pp. 296f.

<sup>2</sup> The minor gods associated with the circumpolar stars, that never set.

<sup>3</sup> The minor gods associated with the stars in the southern regions of the heavens, that rise and set.

Thy word—who knows it, who rivals it?  
 Lord, in heaven and in earth, thou hast among the gods,  
 thy brothers, no rival.  
 Lofty king of kings, whose command none rivals, whom  
 no god resembles in divinity."

Upon this hymn Baentsch remarks: "he who speaks thus of his god can hardly have room for other gods in his heart," and thinks that it can scarcely be denied that here the note of monotheism is sounded. Yet, while we recognize the splendid isolation of Sin's position as here portrayed, and also the fact that he has ethical characteristics, it seems that we are still some distance from the goal of a true monotheism. The other gods are mentioned as existing beside Sin, though their positions are inferior. The son of Sin, Shamash, is named, and, what is from our point of view still more significant, his "beloved consort (Ningal?)."

Similar hymns, though none quite so fine as this, may be found, in which other deities occupy a supremely exalted place as compared with their rivals. Ishtar is thus addressed:<sup>1</sup>

"To thee I cry, Queen of Queens, Goddess of Goddesses,  
 Ishtar, queen of all dwelling-places, leader of men !

\* \* \* \* \*

At the thought of thy name heaven and earth tremble,  
 The gods tremble, the Anunnaki bow down,  
 Thy terrible name is reverenced by men ;  
 Thou indeed art great and exalted  
 All mankind do homage to thy name."

Or again, another hymn<sup>2</sup> may represent Marduk

<sup>1</sup> See Jeremias *Handbuch*, pp. 261ff.

<sup>2</sup> See Dhorme, *Choix*, pp. 352ff.

as receiving the homage of the gods of the whole world, and rejoicing his heart at the obeisance of the great gods. But, rating all this at the highest valuation, it leads merely to monarchism, which perhaps should logically have developed into pantheism : but certainly it is not monotheism in the full sense. As compared with Hebrew doctrine the vital difference lies in the recognition of other gods as real, though inferior. The most explicit of those documents<sup>1</sup> which equate other gods to one god is BM 47406, in which a number of deities are identified with Marduk in his several functions.

- “ The god Tu (?) = Marduk of irrigation.
- The god Lugal-a-ki = Marduk of the subterranean region.
- The god Ninib = Marduk of strength.
- The god Nergal = Marduk of battle.
- The god Zamama = Marduk of slaughter.
- The god En-lil = Marduk of lordship.
- The god Nabu = Marduk of commerce (?).
- The god Sin = Marduk as luminary of the night.
- The god Shamash = Marduk of justice.
- The god Adad = = Marduk of rain.”

Three other equations are preserved on the list, and a large part of it is broken away.

This document evidently derives from the period when Babylon was in the ascendant, and consequently all possible glory was heaped upon the head of the chief local deity, Marduk. It is thus of comparatively late date, though it may rest upon ancient astrological speculations. Similar cases are adduced by Bezold, in which the place of Marduk, as the primary deity to whom others

<sup>1</sup> Examples will be found in Rogers, CP, pp. 192f.

are equated, is taken by Ea, Bel, Ninib, or some other god. Fairly close parallels can be found in the Egyptian sources for the god Ra. Semitic deities are much less strongly individualized than Indo-European ones, and the ready way in which the gods in the mythological legends exchange places and attributes makes it easy for the philosophizing type of mind to evolve some such scheme as that of the Marduk tablet. The highest claim we can concede to the scheme is that it makes an approach to monotheistic doctrine, being a kind of henotheism, in which the gods are emanations of one deity underlying them all. But the reality of the several gods still remains. Moore calls it a "banal litany," a "liturgical glorification of Marduk."<sup>1</sup> On the back of this very Marduk tablet is a list of eight different classes of priests described as images or representatives of eight different gods respectively. Nor is it apparent that this type of speculation ever left the precincts of the philosopher's study to exercise any serious influence on the religion.

There is one other inscription which must not be ignored, for it, too, has been the ground of some far-reaching assertions. Upon a statue of the reign of Adad-nirari, (811-782) found at Kelah, which is probably that of the king, though it may represent the god, an ascription of praise to Nabu is concluded by the injunction, addressed to any prince who might succeed Adad-nirari, "Trust thou in Nabu, and trust thou in no other god!"

<sup>1</sup> Moore, *History of Religions*, p. 242.

Jeremias<sup>1</sup> and Baentsch<sup>2</sup> interpret the inscription as having political rather than religious significance. It is in their view an attempt to replace Marduk by Nabu, a piece of "anti-Babylonian politics" on the part of Assyria, a revolt against the hierarchic supremacy of Babylon, for which Marduk stood. Had it been concerned with Ashur, the national deity, rather than with Nabu, there would have been more plausibility in this hypothesis. We are more disposed to agree with the conclusion of Causse,<sup>3</sup> that we are dealing here rather with the "enthusiasm of a devotee," who is exalting his favourite deity to a position of pre-eminence in the pantheon. That is to say, the underlying spirit of the inscription is exactly what we find in a dialogue<sup>4</sup> between Ashurbanipal and Nabu, which begins with the line, uttered by the king,

"I extol thy majesty, O Nabu, in the assembly  
of the great gods."

and concludes with the line, uttered by the god,

"Because thou, Ashurbanipal, standest before  
the great gods to extol the god Nabu."

This dialogue Jeremias himself interprets as the prayer of one who stands before the Olympic deities uttering ecstatic praises of his own special patron deity. But, whatever view may be taken of the Nabu inscription, it cannot be interpreted as monotheistic. The body of the inscription describes Nabu as the "beloved of Bel." The most that can be granted here is that a preference

<sup>1</sup> Jeremias, *Handbuch*, p. 228.

<sup>2</sup> Baentsch, AM, p. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Causse, PIRO, p. 308.

<sup>4</sup> See Jeremias, MS, pp. 29-31.

is displayed for one particular deity, which might in time have become so marked as to reduce all the others to utter insignificance.

Summarizing the whole position we may say, first of all, that such "latent monotheism" as we find in Egypt or Babylon is quite different from the Old Testament monotheism. So far as it can be said to have any real existence it is a matter rather of vague philosophical speculation than of vital religion. It is, moreover, chiefly the product of syncretism, whereas the higher religion of Israel was characteristically intolerant of syncretism. It was esoteric, the possession of the elect and superior few, not striving to impress itself upon the popular religion by missionary activity. One partial exception to this may be found in Akhenaten's attempt to impose his doctrine by the use of the imperial power. And above all the Babylonian doctrine at its best lacked the tremendous emphasis on ethics which is the outstanding and determining character of Hebrew monotheism. Nor, even if we grant all the claims made for the prevalence of Babylonian and Egyptian culture in Canaan, is it easy to see in what way such approaches towards monotheism as we have discussed have exercised any decisive influence upon the religion of Israel.

## CHAPTER VI.

### Creation Stories.

THE most familiar and important of the Babylonian creation stories is the epic known, from its opening words, as *enuma elish* (=when on high): though, strictly speaking, since the passages in it which deal with creation are only subsidiary to its main purpose, to call it a creation story is hardly accurate. It may be useful to have before us a summary of the whole poem.<sup>1</sup>

#### FIRST TABLET.

Before the heavens or the gods are created there exist three primeval beings, Apshu,<sup>2</sup> Mummu,<sup>3</sup> Tiamat.<sup>4</sup> From the mingling of their waters are created the gods, first Lahmu and Lahamu, then Anshar and Kishar, whose first-born, Anu, begets Nudimmud "his equal." The gods rebel against

<sup>1</sup> The best edition of the Epic is Langdon's *The Babylonian Epic of Creation*, which gives transliteration, translation, very full discussion and notes. Transliteration and translation also in King, *Creation*, I, pp. xxv-cxxiii, 1-115; Rogers, CP, pp. 3-44; Dhorme, *Choix*, pp. 2-81. Translations in Gressmann, TuB, I, pp. 1-25; Zimmern in Gunkel SC, pp. 401-417; Clay, *Origin*, pp. 191-213; Jirku, AK, pp. 2-12; Weber, *Literatur*, pp. 44-53; *The Babylonian Legends of the Creation*, British Museum, pp. 31-66.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 146f.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 148.

<sup>4</sup> See pp. 148f.

the primeval powers. These latter, among whom Tiamat is the most prominent, plan to subdue their troublers. The wisest of all the gods, Ea (=Nudimmud<sup>1</sup>), perceiving their design, by means of an incantation throws Apshu into a sleep. He then slays Apshu and Mummu. Ashur (replacing Marduk in the Babylonian original) is born of Lahmu and Lahamu. Ashur grows to majestic proportions, and becomes very sage, like Ea : "wide-eared" was Ea, but Ashur has four ears, and four eyes. After a panegyric on Ashur the poem goes back to report the dismay of Tiamat when she was told the fate of Apshu and Mummu. A "bright god"—his name has disappeared from the earlier part of the tablet, where it was, no doubt, given<sup>2</sup>—incites her to revenge. Their forces are marshalled. Umma-Hubur<sup>3</sup>, spawns fearsome and gruesome monsters—the Viper, the Raging Serpent, Lahamu, the Great Lion, the Gruesome Hound, the Scorpion-Man, the Fish-Man, the Fish-Ram, and others, eleven in all. She exalts Kingu, her son, to be her consort and commander-in-chief, giving him the "tables of fate." Her design is that he shall be master of the gods and ruler of their fates.

#### SECOND TABLET.

Ea hears of Tiamat's bellicose preparations, and

<sup>1</sup> A title of Ea, meaning "fashioner of the form of man." Langdon, *Epic*, p. 70<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Langdon, *op. cit.*, p. 84<sup>6</sup>, suggests Kingu (?) or Lahmu (?).

<sup>3</sup> A title of Tiamat. See pp. 149f.

is in a state of collapse through fear. He goes to Anshar, and reports Tiamat's doings. The thirty lines describing these are repeated from the first tablet. Anshar is greatly distressed, and apparently commissions Ea to act against Tiamat. There is here a gap in the text, lines being lost which recorded either Ea's refusal of the task, or his failure to achieve victory. (Rather curiously, Langdon takes the former view in his note, the latter in his analysis.) Anshar then sends Anu to appease her; but he flees, panic-stricken at the sight of the enraged Tiamat. Anshar is reduced to moaning and shaking his head at Ea. Then he summons Marduk—the name for some reason or other was allowed to stand, and not, as we should have expected, altered to Ashur—son of Ea, and Ea introduces him into the presence of Anshar. Marduk undertakes the commission, but stipulates that if he succeeds he shall be made equal to the greatest of the gods.

### THIRD TABLET.

Anshar sends Gaga, his messenger, to summon Lahmu and Lahamu with the other gods to a meeting in Ubsukkinaku, the council-chamber of the gods. His instructions repeat once more the long passage about Tiamat's preparations, and Marduk's speech. Both are yet again repeated by Gaga to Lahmu and Lahamu with their attendant deities. These obey the summons, and in the council-chamber drink themselves into a maudlin state of courage.

## FOURTH TABLET.

The gods promote Marduk to a position of equality with Anu, giving to him "kingship of universal power over everything." They bid him test his new power by destroying with his word of command a garment, and then recreating it. He passes the double test successfully, they hail him as king, and invest him with royal insignia. He makes for himself weapons, including a bow, and a net. He enlists the four great winds as auxiliaries. Taking his great weapon, the flood-storm, he mounts his chariot, driven by "Destroyer," "Merciless," "Stormer," and "Swift of Flight," and in a sheen of flames sets forth to encounter the enemy. In his hand is the plant which extinguishes poison, presumably an antidote to the poison-gas emitted by Tiamat. The gods accompany their champion. After a brief duel of words Tiamat utters an incantation against him, which is ineffective. They join combat; Marduk enmeshes her in his net, and, when she opens her mouth to swallow him, causes the terrible winds he has created to inflate her like a balloon. He then pierces her with an arrow and slays her. Her auxiliaries are bound with cords, among them Kingu himself, from whom Marduk takes the tablets of fate. He splits the carcase of Tiamat into two parts "like a shell-fish." One half he erects into the dome of the sky, placing a bolt and stationing watchmen to prevent her waters descending. He establishes Anu, Enlil, and Ea, in their respective domains of

heaven, air, and water. The tablet breaks off, incomplete.

#### FIFTH TABLET.

This tablet contains an “astronomical poem,” of which only a small part has been recovered. Even that part is by no means easy of interpretation, as the technical astrological and astronomical terms employed are still the subject of discussion. Marduk constructs “stations” for the great gods, determines the year, and marks out the signs of the Zodiac. He fixes gates, one at each extremity, East and West. Through the former the sun was supposed to appear at his rising; through the latter to disappear at his setting. The moon has his position and functions assigned, among the latter being to “determine the days.” Recovery of the complete poem would elucidate many mysteries connected with the Babylonian astrology. Apparently the poem concluded with a hymn of praise to Marduk by the gods.

#### SIXTH TABLET.

Marduk conceives a brilliant idea, which he announces to Ea. He will create blood and bone, and from them fashion man. His purpose is that the gods may be honoured by the performance of ritual. The sage Ea suggests that the materials may be furnished for this purpose from the body of one of the gods. The gods are assembled. Marduk proposes that Kingu, leader of the vanquished host, should be devoted to this end.

The gods approve, and from the blood of Kingu's arteries Ea—not, as would have been expected, Marduk—creates mankind, and imposes upon them the duty of worshipping the gods. Marduk then marshals the gods into their ranks and stations. As a reward for his services the gods propose a shrine for Marduk. "When Marduk heard this his countenance beamed profusely as the sun." So the Anunnaki build Babylon, and its temple, Esagila, for the service of Marduk. For themselves they build chapels in its precincts. In the new shrine they have a house-warming, and drink beer. Then "laws were fixed and plans designed"; fates were fixed for all men. Enlil (=Marduk) displays the weapons which he had used in his encounter with Tiamat. The bow is fixed in the heavens, as the Bow Star.<sup>1</sup> Marduk is made ruler of mankind, and superintendent of worship. The gods assign to him fifty names.<sup>2</sup> They sing praises to Marduk, based on these names as a theme. With this tablet the collection of tablets at one time ended.

#### SEVENTH TABLET.

This consists of an independent bilingual hymn on the names of Marduk, a Semitic version of which is attached to the Epic.

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Before we proceed to a more general discussion

<sup>1</sup> So the Babylonians called Sirius. Cf. Langdon, *Tammuz and Ishtar*, pp. 169f.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the hundred beautiful names of Allah.

of the epic it may be well to deal with three or four names that are prominent. *Apshu* is translated "ocean" by Dhorme and Jirku. The probable meaning of the name is the fresh-water ocean which Semitic thought supposed to underlie the earth, and to be the source of all springs and fountains, feeding also the salt water ocean; it is known in the Old Testament as "the waters under the earth." The name is used either for the actual ocean, or for the deity which personified it. That *apshu* is the original from which the Hebrew word *'ephes* is derived is almost universally taken for granted. Clay has strongly contested<sup>1</sup> the usual interpretation of *Apshu*. Accepting the connection between the Hebrew and Babylonian words, he reverses the usual order, believing that the Babylonian word is not the source but the derivative. His first reason is that there is an etymology for the word in Hebrew, but none in Babylonian. This statement is hazardous, for *Apshu* may quite well be a loan-word from the Sumerian *ab-zu*<sup>2</sup> (=house of wisdom). He makes a more important point when he asserts that the ordinary meaning "ocean" seems in some passages to be quite out of place. In the first tablet of *enuma elish* it is said that Ea, after slaying Apshu, "fixed upon Apshu his dwelling." Clay thinks that obviously in this statement *Apshu* cannot mean "ocean." He quotes<sup>3</sup> further a ritual text in which Ea is said to have "pinched off clay

<sup>1</sup> Clay, *Origin*, pp. 79ff.

<sup>2</sup> So Langdon, *Epic*, p. 66.

<sup>3</sup> From Weissbach's *Babylonische Miscellen*.

from the *apshu*" : surely, he argues, here *apshu* must mean something other than "ocean." His own interpretation is that *Apshu* in Babylonian means originally "the ends of the earth," as '*ephes* in Hebrew means "end." He brings the word into connection with Ea, the god of Eridu, most ingeniously. On his theory that Amorites—speaking a tongue so closely allied to Hebrew that Clay uses "Hebrew" as its name—were the earliest colonists of Eridu, which was close to the head of the Persian Gulf, he supposes that they called it "'*ephes*' because for them it was Land's End.

It may be granted that in Babylonian literature *apshu* does not always mean the same thing. But the passage which represents Ea as establishing his dwelling upon Apshu is explicable on the ground that Apshu is here a deity, not an ocean of water. It is exactly parallel to the conception according to which half of Tiamat was erected into a firmament. And, whatever may be the case elsewhere, since *enuma elish* describes the creation as originating in the mingling of the waters of Apshu, Mummu, and Tiamat, it is probable that the old interpretation which sees in Apshu a personification of the ocean under the earth is correct for that passage. It is of interest to note that a regular feature in the equipment of Babylonian temples was an "*apshu*," which was a great basin holding water, in all likelihood similar to the "molten sea" of Solomon's temple.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings 7<sup>23ff.</sup>

*Mummu* Langdon renders, rather curiously, by “the Form” on its first occurrence, but not subsequently. Jirku explains it as “water-deeps.” Dhorme takes it to be an epithet to Tiamat, and renders the combination by “the tumultuous Tiamat.” Grammatically it is quite possible to regard Mummu and Tiamat as standing in apposition. This, however, makes the subsequent appearance of Mummu as a separate personage in the Epic strange. In favour of the view that Mummu is not to be identified with Tiamat is the fact that Damascius in Περὶ τῶν ἀρχῶν has a passage obviously based upon *enuma elish* in which he gives Moumis as the son of Apason and Tauthe, that is, Mummu as the son of Apshu and Tiamat. Clay takes the view that Mummu is in apposition to Tiamat, and follows George Smith in connecting it with the Hebrew *m<sup>e</sup>humah* (=tumult); he renders in the same way as Dhorme. On the whole it seems better to regard Mummu as, like Apshu, a personification of water. Jeremias regards Mummu as a personification of wisdom.<sup>1</sup> Since he appears later in the epic as Apshu’s messenger he has been likened to the Logos, an idea which underlies Langdon’s rendering “the Form.”

*Tiamat* is usually understood to be a feminine personification of primeval water, and equated to the *t<sup>e</sup>hom* of Gen. 1<sup>2</sup>, rendered “the deep.” In earlier Hebrew the word seems to denote the subterranean ocean, and is feminine. Later Hebrew uses it more generally, of the sea, or torrents of

<sup>1</sup> Jeremias, *Handbuch*, p. 14.

water, sometimes in the plural, and sometimes as masculine. Since it is used in the singular without the article it must have been at some time a proper name. Hence it is generally supposed that *t̄hom* in Gen. 1 is a "faded" mythological conception. This seems probable, though not absolutely certain. Clay agrees that *Tiamat* and *t̄hom* are really the same word, but inverts the usual argument by deriving the former from the latter. Examining the various ways in which the name is written in Babylonian script he finds that the "h" is never represented by the "breathing" which might reasonably have been expected to occur somewhere if the Babylonian word is the original. Further, while Hebrew has several allied roots, there is no Babylonian etymology for the word. So he concludes<sup>1</sup> that Babylonia owes this word also to Amorite immigrants. A point often overlooked is that in *enuma elish* Tiamat is a woman, rather than a dragon or a serpent. She is mother of the gods, has consort and lover.

*Umma Hubur* is uncertain both as to its meaning and as to its application. Dhorme renders "Mother of all," emphasizing the excellent parallelism which would thus be provided for the expression "designer of all things" in the second half of the line. He regards the name as a title of Tiamat's, pointing out that in the first tablet, l.154, Kingu is addressed by *Umma Hubur* as her husband, and that in Tablet 4.l.66, Kingu is spoken of as Tiamat's husband. This conclusion is generally accepted, though

<sup>1</sup> Clay, *Origin*, pp. 87ff.

Jastrow regards Umma Hubur as a primeval monster quite distinct from Tiamat, and thinks her appearance in the Epic is due to the composition of different stories.<sup>1</sup> Most translators have left the name untranslated. Hubur is the name of a stream of salt water which was supposed to encircle the earth, and was associated with the underworld. Clay ingeniously suggests,<sup>2</sup> on the ground that he has found *puhru* (=assembly) used as a gloss on *hubur*, that the latter word means "assembly," and is cognate with the Hebrew root *hbr* (=join, associate). Accordingly he renders by "Mother of the assembly (of the gods)." Naturally he again lays stress on the idea that the Babylonian word is thus shown to be derived from an Amorite root. The safest conclusions are that in the Epic the name, whatever be its origin, is used of Tiamat; and that, though Clay's suggestion is attractive, the meaning is as yet uncertain. It is worth while to notice that Berossus, in his account of the Babylonian cosmogony, mentions a feminine being Omorka, whom he identifies with Thamte, explaining the latter word as "the sea," so that he takes the view that Omorka, who is doubtless the Babylonian Umma Hubur, and Tiamat are one and the same.

The epic *enuma elish* was first brought to light by George Smith, in his book *The Chaldean Genesis*, almost fifty years ago; the documents he used were found in the great collection of Ashurbanipal unearthed at Nineveh. These were, of course,

<sup>1</sup> Jastrow, HBT, pp. 74, 111.

<sup>2</sup> Clay, *Origin*, p. 95.

comparatively late copies of the Babylonian version. Many gaps were filled by King in his great book *The Seven Tablets of Creation*, 1902. The excavations at Ashur by the German expedition have made considerable contributions towards the completion of the text, but have left the fifth tablet still but a fragment. The most complete edition of the text in English has been recently published by Langdon under the title *The Babylonian Epic of Creation*,<sup>1</sup> in which full use is made of Ebeling's edition of the Ashur texts. In form the Epic is elaborately poetical. Each line divides into two parts—the division between them being actually marked in some copies. Very great use is made of the parallelism so characteristic of Old Testament poetry. To quote almost at random, lines 81-86 of the first tablet run :

" In the midst of the nether sea	was born Ashur
In the midst of the pure nether sea	was born Ashur
Begat him Lahmu	his father
Lahamu his mother	was his bearer.
He sucked the breasts	of goddesses
A nurse tended him	and filled him with terribleness.

It will be noticed that in the second pair of these lines, and less obviously in the third pair, use is made of chiasma to avoid the monotony which would result from a stereotyped parallelism.

Much has often been made of the fact that, as we now find it, the Epic is written upon seven tablets, and it has even been asserted that here we have the model from which the sevenfold

<sup>1</sup> Upon which our summary is based, and from which we have quoted.

division in the Priestly story of Creation was copied. Undoubtedly seven was a number of special significance, but the established fact that the seventh tablet is a later addition to the other six makes any insistence on the number seven of the tablets precarious. Nor, moreover, is it easy to believe that the astronomical poem which constitutes the fifth tablet is part of the original. However that may be, if any number at all is to be emphasized it will be six rather than seven. Langdon asserts<sup>1</sup> that the arrangement in six books follows a regular bilingual custom, and that when the Babylonians adapted Sumerian liturgies and supplied them with an interlinear Semitic version they almost invariably distributed the matter over six tablets.

Not only do the seven tablets fail to form a unity, but obviously the matter contained in individual tablets is composite. Evidence suggests that the Epic must have passed through a long history of development and elaboration, in which allied stories and diverse themes were worked into a semblance of unity. That the Assyrians took over the Epic from the Babylonians and adapted it for themselves by substituting Ashur's name for that of Marduk is shown by the text as we possess it. But Marduk himself has no grievance, for the priests of Babylon had introduced Marduk into the Epic in exactly the same way. There are hints in the story that an earlier version existed in which Ea played the part of hero, which was later attributed to Marduk. The incident of Anu's

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 11f.

failure to meet the situation created by the rebellion of the gods may point to the existence of a version in which he was actually the successful champion, and which was manipulated to throw the greater glory upon the god selected to play Anu's part, by making him succeed where Anu had failed. Jastrow, who has argued in detail for the composite character of the Epic, is probably right when he supposes that there was a story originating at Eridu, in which Ea was the hero, and another composed at Uruk, which glorified Anu. His further speculation<sup>1</sup> that Apshu, Mummu, and Tiamat, are three different names for the watery chaos, which were used at separate centres, and have been differentiated in the combining of the stories, is more hazardous. Langdon has shown<sup>2</sup> that there must have been an older Sumerian story, in which Ninurta was the champion of the gods. A further mark of the compositeness of the Epic is the variety of themes which it contains, including, among others, a theogony, the conflict of light with darkness, and the control of the tablets of fate. As Weber has remarked,<sup>3</sup> myths dealing with these separate themes must have had an independent existence before they were worked into the Epic. Another argument has been urged by King. He says,<sup>4</sup> "The welding of incongruous elements is very apparent in the Semitic version. For the statement that man will be created in order that the gods may have worshippers is at once followed

<sup>1</sup> Jastrow, HBT, p. 76.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 16-20.

<sup>3</sup> Weber, *Literatur*, p. 43.

<sup>4</sup> King, *Legends*, p. 116.

by the announcement that the gods themselves must be punished and their ‘ways’ changed.” But the lines which King renders, “But I will alter the ways of the gods, and I will change (their paths), Together shall they be oppressed and unto evil shall (they \* \* \* ),” should, though their meaning is obscure, more probably be rendered, “But I will skilfully transform the ways of the gods, Together shall they be honoured \* \* ”; so that this particular argument seems not to be well founded.

As to the time when the existing form of the Epic was fashioned there can be no doubt. Its very obvious design of making Marduk, the patron god of Babylon, supreme among the gods, and of justifying the claim of Babylon to be the ruling city of the world, points clearly to the period of the First Babylonian Dynasty. Approximately, then, it may be dated in the last quarter of the third millennium B.C. It is true we have no tablets dating from that period to support the internal evidence. Perhaps the earliest documentary evidence is to be found in an inscription of Agum-kakrime, of the seventeenth century. This inscription mentions certain copper panels upon which the monsters of Chaos which Marduk subdued are depicted. The seven monsters named are, with one exception, to be identified with those mentioned in the Epic. This is, it must be allowed, not absolutely conclusive. The monsters may, especially in view of the fact that the correspondence is not completely exact, have been taken from

another source ; for, as we have already seen, this part of the story existed in other forms before it was woven into the Epic. But in Langdon's opinion the similarity of order in the two cases is so marked, and the connection with Marduk so definite, that "the probability of borrowing directly from the Epic is almost a certainty."<sup>1</sup>

The Epic, then, dates from at least 2000 B.C., and is a highly composite liturgical poem, embodying various older mythological conceptions, some of which go back to Sumerian originals. Its purpose was the exaltation of Marduk as the pre-eminent deity, and the glorification of Babylon as the metropolis of the world. The form of the sixth tablet, with which the Epic originally concluded, goes to show that it was used liturgically in connection with the great New Year's festival, celebrated annually at Babylon on the first eleven days of Nisan, at the spring equinox, when it was customary for all the gods of Babylon to be brought in their sacred barks to an assembly in Ubshukkinna, the Hall of Fates, in Marduk's temple at Babylon, Esagila. The festival continued to be observed almost down to the Christian era, and we possess texts for the correct performance of the ritual associated with it. The time of observance makes it reasonably sure that from one point of view the Epic was regarded as a solar myth, celebrating the triumph of the spring sun over the powers of darkness. The generally accepted position is expressed by Oettli : the Epic was "originally a

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 10f.

nature myth which paints the victory of the morning sun over the night, and of the spring sun over the chaotic horror of the winter inundations of the Babylonian lowlands.”<sup>1</sup> In any case the creation element is, as the humourist said of Eve, a mere side issue.

Let us turn now to the consideration of the question what is the relation between the Epic and the story of creation with which Genesis begins. In answer to this question some very bold assertions have been made. Delitzsch says,<sup>2</sup> that “the very close connection that exists between the Biblical and the Babylonian creation stories is \* \* clear and illuminating”; he adds,<sup>3</sup> “the priestly scholar who composed Gen. 1 endeavoured, of course, to remove all possible mythological features of this (Babylonian) creation story.” This last sentence reveals the most extreme form of the contention that the P story of creation is dependent upon Babylonian sources, the theory, namely, that some scholarly Hebrew, becoming acquainted with *enuma elish* during the Babylonian exile, adapted it for his own people by carefully eliminating its gross polytheism. This theory is so absurd that it stands in little need of refutation. It is surely inconceivable that a pious Jew of the exilic period, however much he might have been, consciously or unconsciously, influenced in other ways by his environment, could accept from the religion of Babylonia, which must have been

<sup>1</sup> Oettli, *Der Kampf um Bibel und Babel*, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Delitzsch, BB, p. 51.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 50.

thoroughly abhorrent to him, such an important document as the creation story. Nor, even could we admit so unlikely an hypothesis, is the record of Gen. i the kind of result we should expect from the process assumed. King admits<sup>1</sup> that upon a first reading one is struck "more by the differences than by the parallels," but decides that, "if allowance be made for the change in theological standpoint, the material points of resemblance are seen to be very marked." Gunkel is much more cautious, saying<sup>2</sup> that dependence here is "less clear than in the case of the Deluge story;" while Jeremias goes so far as to say<sup>3</sup> that *enuma elish* has few points of contact with Gen. i. These views may be taken as typical of the very divergent solutions offered for the problem. Before entering into a discussion of the evidence we should like to state generally that at any rate the extremer forms of the claims for dependence fail to recognize that Gen. i must have behind it a long history of development *within Israel*: some things in the chapter which are capable of a crude interpretation would never have been suffered to remain, had they not long been features of the national religious literature.

What then are the main elements in the case for the theory that there is a close correspondence between *enuma elish* and the priestly story of creation? The first and most emphasized of them

<sup>1</sup> King, *Legends*, p. 130. <sup>2</sup> Gunkel, *Israel und Babylonien*, p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> Jeremias, KBB, p. 16.

is that in both stories we begin with a watery chaos ; on the one side, the primeval water-chaos personifications Apshu, Mummu, Tiamat ; on the other side T<sup>e</sup>hom, the deep, and the waters covering the earth. It has frequently been contended that here we have convincing proof that the story must have originated in Babylonia, because the idea will have been suggested by the emergence of the land from annual inundations, or from the floods caused by winter rains ; in short, that the story is a nature-myth based on the change of seasons from winter to spring, which could have been evolved only in a country where such inundations were common. This argument has been very vigorously assailed by Clay. He adduces elaborate statistics<sup>1</sup> to prove that it is based on "a complete misunderstanding of the climatic conditions in Babylonia." The rivers there do not flood in the winter, but are at their highest in April and May. Further, the rainfall in Babylonia is so small that the country might "well nigh be classed with desert lands," On the other hand the rainfall for Syria is on the average approximately ten times that of Babylonia. Consequently, he argues, if the one story is dependent on the other it is more likely that the dependence is on the side of Babylonia. But, while Clay's argument illustrates the danger of making and accepting hasty assertions, and seems to be fatal to the hypothesis that a myth *originally* combining the victory of

<sup>1</sup> Clay, *Origin*, pp. 76-78. Cf. also p. 230.

the spring sun<sup>1</sup> with the emergence of the land from winter inundation must have come from Babylonia, we cannot forget that *enuma elish* combines many originally unconnected themes, and that the inundation motif need not be bound up essentially with the spring sun motif. Certainly the emergence of land from water is a motif much more likely to come from a district subject to regular inundation, as Babylonia is at the melting of the Armenian snows. But to admit that if the one story is dependent on the other for this feature it must be the Babylonian one that is the original, does not prove such dependence absolutely. The doctrine of Chaotic Water is found in all the ancient oriental cosmogonies :<sup>2</sup> it may quite well have been evolved in more than one centre originally. However, while the assertions on this point have been too dogmatic, it is on the whole likely that Israel owes this idea to the Babylonians.

A more definite correspondence is found in the parallelism between Tiamat and Tehom. This has been discussed already.<sup>3</sup> It may be granted that the two names have a common original ; but the employment of them is entirely different. In Genesis the mythological element in Tiamat is

<sup>1</sup> Drews holds that the contrast between the climatic conditions of winter and summer in Babylonia is not so marked as to account for a spring-sun myth. "It is chiefly in the highlands of Iran and the mountainous hinterland of Asia Minor that this is the case to such an extent as to make this idea one of the central parts of religious belief."—*The Christ Myth*, pp. 95f.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Jeremias, OTLA, I, p. 175.

<sup>3</sup> See pp. 148f.

reduced to vanishing point. In *enuma elish* Tiamat appears to be a composite conception. In the earlier part of the Epic she is a feminine personification of primeval water. Later, with this conception is merged that of the dragon against whom in the ancient myth the deity does battle. There are undoubtedly echoes of this dragon myth in the Old Testament.<sup>1</sup> The subject has been elaborately worked out by Gunkel in *Schöpfung und Chaos*. But, while in these passages the combination of the dragon with the primeval sea as an enemy to the deity may be found, and reference even to the monsters created as allies of Tiamat, with one striking exception, to be referred to presently, the dragon combat motif is entirely absent from Gen. 1. So far from a combat between Yahweh and Tehom we are presented with the picture of the spirit of God brooding peacefully over the deep. It has been suggested that here we have, rather, a reminiscence of the ancient myth of the world-egg.

The exception just referred to is the statement that God erected a firmament in the midst of the waters, to divide the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament. This can hardly be independent of the lines in the fourth tablet of *enuma elish* (136-140), which tell us that Marduk, after gazing on the body of the vanquished Tiamat,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Isa. 51<sup>9f.</sup>, 27<sup>1</sup>, 30<sup>7</sup>; Psa. 89<sup>10ff.</sup>, 74<sup>12-19</sup>; Job 26<sup>12f.</sup>, 9<sup>18</sup>.

"Divided the monster, devising cunning things.  
 He split her into two parts like a shell fish.  
 Half of her he set up, and made the heavens as a covering.  
 He slid the bolt and caused watchmen to be stationed ;  
 He directed them not to let her waters come forth."

Since the Epic is imperfect at this point, and nothing is said as to the disposal of the remaining half of Tiamat, it is probable that in the lost lines it was told how this remaining half was transformed into the earth. Even in this case of undoubted parallelism it is possible that the writer of Gen. i was familiar with the idea in some context other than *enuma elish*.

A comparison of Gen. i with the fifth tablet is instructive. The former names the heavenly bodies in the order sun, moon, stars ; and it seems not unlikely from the way in which the stars are mentioned—"He made the stars also"—that the clause referring to them is a later addition. The lights are "for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years." The sun is to rule the day, the moon the night. "For signs" is capable of construction in the sense that omens are to be obtained from the lights, but the main function of the latter is to give light and regulate the calendar. In *enuma elish* the order is stars, moon, and then, almost incidentally, the sun. In the version which Berossus gives of the Babylonian myth the order is stars, sun, moon, and, last of all, the five planets. This varies from the order of *enuma elish*, but agrees in the point that the stars come first of all. In the Babylonian astral religion

stars and moon play a much more important part than does the sun. The last-named is almost invariably placed in the second position when mentioned in the same context with the moon. The Sumerian text of another creation story<sup>1</sup> mentions the moon only: the later Semitic "version" of it introduces the sun in place of the moon. This shows how much more important the moon was for the earlier times. We read, too, in *enuma elish* that the lord, Marduk,

"caused the moon to shine forth, entrusting to him the night.

He fixed him as a being of the night to determine the days."<sup>2</sup>

This is arrestingly reminiscent of the Genesis account in phraseology, but we must remember that the tablet in which the passage is found is probably, in its original state, independent of the Epic.

The interpretation of the plural pronoun in "And God said let us make man," has much perplexed the exegetes. The older commentators saw in it an adumbration of the Trinity. It has been explained also along the lines of the "plural of majesty," or as a "deliberative plural." A very close parallel is found in the "Who will go for us?" of Isa. 6.<sup>3</sup> The most satisfying interpretation is that the plural refers to the divine court of "immortals," the *bene 'elohim* of Job 1<sup>6</sup>, beings of divine rank, but completely subordinate to Yahweh.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> King, *Creation*, I, pp. 125f.

<sup>2</sup> Tablet V, ll. 12f.

<sup>3</sup> So Gunkel, *Genesis*, p. 111. But cf. Peake, *Commentary*, p. 137.

If this be accepted we find here a partial parallel in *enuma elish*, where Marduk announces to Ea "that which he has conceived in his heart," namely, that he "will cause man to stand forth."<sup>1</sup> Another point of connection between the two stories may be found in the fact that in both the newly created man is to be in some sense a partaker of the divine.<sup>2</sup> In *enuma elish* man is created from the blood of the slain god Kingu : in Gen. 1<sup>27</sup> man is made "in the image, and after the likeness" of God. But the parallel is one of general idea rather than of exact correspondence. A much closer parallel is discoverable in the passage of the Babylonian Epic which describes the creation of the gods, according to which

"Anshar made Anu, his first-born, equal to himself,

And as to Anu, he begat Nudimmud his equal."

Does the consideration of these points of correspondence lead then to the conclusion that the Genesis story was composed by a writer who was acquainted with *enuma elish*? We have already rejected emphatically the hypothesis that the Biblical account is in any sense a "version" of the Babylonian myth. But, since *enuma elish* was in existence long before the beginnings of Biblical literature, it is certainly possible that the material of Israel's tradition which lay ready to the hand of "P" may have been already influenced by Babylon. The differences are so much more

<sup>1</sup> Tablet VI, l. 2.

<sup>2</sup> See further p. 176.

striking than the resemblances that in any case the influence is slight, and where resemblance is closest it is in matters of detail. The most plausible evidence for connection is that derived from the equation Tiamat=T<sup>e</sup>hom, and from the parallelism to the "splitting" of Tiamat. Other mythological ideas common to both stories are too widespread to compel the conclusion that either has borrowed from the other. Even in the two cases mentioned it seems to be plausible, rather than inevitable, that there is a debt to *enuma elish*. The points of resemblance might come from common sources originally existing in quite different forms. King, who feels that there is a definite dependence of Gen. 1 upon the Epic, has insisted on the fact that, since Tiamat has no exact counterpart in the early Sumerian conceptions, the points of resemblance must be traced directly to the Semitic Epic. But, after all, the question as to whether such matter as is common to the two stories is to be traced to Babylon directly in the form of *enuma elish*, or to traditions embodied afterwards in *enuma elish*, is not of the first importance.

Perhaps a stronger argument for the position that Gen. 1 was written with *enuma elish* in view might be derived from the suggestion that in the earlier chapters of Genesis a deliberate polemic against the Babylonian Epic may be discovered. Jeremias long ago hazarded a conjecture<sup>1</sup> that "Gen. 2<sup>4ff.</sup> with the conclusion 'then Yahweh formed man' might be a conscious polemic against

<sup>1</sup> Jeremias, KBB, p. 16.

the beginning of the Babylonian Epic," whose ninth line runs, "Then were created the gods." In itself this conjecture is not very convincing, and Jeremias himself does not put it forward with any confidence. So far as we know, the striking likeness between Gen. 6<sup>5f.</sup> and the lines in *enuma elish* describing the rebellion of the gods has not been adduced in this connection. Here are the passages for comparison :

"And Yahweh saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented Yahweh that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart."

#### TABLET I.

- 21. "They were banded together, the brothers, the gods.
- 22. They rebelled against Tiamat and glorified their defender.

\* \* \* \* \*

- 34. They (Apshu and Mummu) consulted plans with regard to the gods their first-born sons.
- 35. Apshu opened his mouth \* \* saying

\* \* \* \* \*

- 37. 'Their way has become grievous unto me
- 38. By day I am not rested, by night I sleep not;
- 39. I will destroy them and confound their ways.' "

With this last line from the Epic we may compare the Tower of Babel story, Gen. 11<sup>1-9</sup>, in which men were anxious to lift themselves up to the region where God dwelt, and Yahweh said :

"Let us go down and confound their language."

We might add to these instances also the fact, already mentioned,<sup>1</sup> that Anshar is described as making Anu "equal to himself," as God makes man in His own image. Does it not seem almost as though these early Hebrew traditions have deliberately set man into exactly the same place that in the Babylonian traditions is filled by the gods? It is true, of course, that two of these instances come not from P, but from J; if, however, we can really find in J a conscious manipulation of Babylonian myths in order to replace the gods by men, and thus establish that *enuma elish* was known to J, *a fortiori* it will have been familiar to P.

Jastrow finds also in Gen. 1<sup>21</sup>—"God created the great sea-monsters,"—where the Hebrew word translated "great sea-monsters" is the same that Old Testament poetry uses to describe the great primeval monster vanquished by Yahweh, "a protest against the nature myth which assumed the great dragons, including their leader Tiamat, or Rahab, or Leviathan, as pre-existent."<sup>2</sup>

On the whole the evidence seems to warrant the conclusion that *enuma elish* was known to the authors of the early chapters of Genesis, but that their position is not so much one of dependence upon as of revulsion from it. How would it have become familiar to the Hebrews? It is not impossible that it may have been brought from Babylonia in the migration from Ur and Harran. More probable, however, is the theory that the

<sup>1</sup> See p. 163.

<sup>2</sup> Jastrow, HBT, p. 121.

Epic was well known in Canaan from the first half of the second millennium B.C. (as we saw above<sup>1</sup>, Babylonian myth is found among the Tell-el-Amarna documents), and that the Hebrews would inherit their knowledge of it from the Canaanites, just as they were influenced in other ways by Canaanite culture.

Whatever points of agreement may be found between *enuma elish* and the creation story of Gen. i are, nevertheless, almost insignificant when contrasted with the points of difference, and are to be found in the form rather than the spirit. It would hardly be an exaggeration to say that the likeness between them is comparable with such a likeness as might be found between Caliban, studying theology on his island, and Augustine.

To take a small point first, Gen. i as a work of art is much more of a unity than the Epic; and this proposition would hold good even of the combination of the priestly story with the J story that follows it. There are also differences of form: the Epic has no six-days division, and its order of creation is different. The Biblical story is the product of a much higher development of philosophic thought. But the greatest contrast is to be found in the respective ideas of God. For P God stands first, "in the beginning"; whereas the chief hero of the Epic has behind him a long evolution and genealogy. There is nothing said of Marduk to place beside the effortless ease with which God "speaks and it is done." From

<sup>1</sup> See p. 53.

the Biblical story the numerous gods, monsters, demons, and dragons, of Babylonian mythology are all absent. We are dealing there with a monotheism as contrasted with a gross polytheism. The jealousies, plots and counterplots, hatreds, violence, cowardice, and drunkenness, displayed by the gods of the Epic have no counterpart in Genesis. We do not forget that it has been asserted that in Gen. 1 polytheism may be traced—an assertion based on the use of the plural '*elohim*' for God, and the plural in "let us make." The latter point has already been discussed,<sup>1</sup> and as to the former it may be replied that, even though the plural '*elohim*' may point back to a time when gods were many, there is no reason to doubt that for generations before Genesis was written it had conveyed a singular idea. Whatever may be the explanation of the use of the plural '*elohim*' to denote one god, the usage can be traced right back to the El-Amarna period. In a letter to Rib-Addi<sup>2</sup> the writer prays, "*Ilanu* (plural of *ilu*=god) *shulumka shulum bitika liishal* (singular verb)"="May the godhead ascertain thy well-being and the well-being of thy family!" So too in another<sup>3</sup> of the Amarna letters we find "*ellakh ilanuka*"="thy god came," where the noun is plural and the verb singular. Again in yet another<sup>4</sup> of the letters the king addressed is described as *ilani-ia*, literally "my gods," where evidently the noun is understood

<sup>1</sup> See p. 162.

<sup>2</sup> Knudtzon, TA, No. 189.

<sup>3</sup> Knudtzon, TA, No. 96.

<sup>4</sup> Knudtzon, TA, No. 235.

as a singular. As Weber comments,<sup>1</sup> in the first two examples, the former of which is probably repeated in Letter 97, the reference must be to the godhead, and not to the king, so that here “we have a ‘plural of amplitude’ exactly parallel to the Hebrew use of *’elohim*.<sup>2</sup>” A similar usage is found in the documents recovered from Boghazkeui, where in an enumeration of divine names *ilani* (plural) is prefixed to some, and *ilu* (singular) to another.<sup>3</sup> So also in Phoenician inscriptions *’elim* (plural of *’el*) occasionally denotes *one* god. Since the discovery of a god named Habiru in a list of divinities from Ashur Jirku has proposed<sup>4</sup> to find in the *ilani Habiri* of the Boghazkeui documents, usually rendered “gods of the Habiru,” rather “the god Habiru,” and so yet another parallel to *’elohim*=god. This is precarious, but the other parallels remain unaffected. It has been urged also that the idea of God creating man in His own image points to an anthropomorphic conception of God. While this is in a sense true, it does not necessarily connote a mean conception of God, far less a polytheistic one. There is a Rabbinic tract<sup>4</sup> which discusses the details of the measurement of God’s body; yet its author was no doubt a monotheist who had a comparatively high idea of God’s majesty. Even a Christian, though he believes that God is spirit, finds it difficult to think

<sup>1</sup> Knudtzon, TA, p. 1190.

<sup>2</sup> Jirku, AK, p. 19.

<sup>3</sup> See Gustav, ZAW, 1922, p. 314.

<sup>4</sup> Brought to my notice by Canon Box: see *Shi'ur Komah* in the *Jewish Encyclopædia*.

about God in any other form than the human. Certainly a writer whose religious outlook was so anti-anthropomorphic as that of "P" would not have retained such an expression had he supposed it likely to lead to an interpretation unworthy of God.

We must not forget that in the Old Testament there is another important creation story, contained in the Story of Paradise, Gen. 2<sup>4b</sup>-3<sup>24</sup>, which comes from the J document. Gunkel has shown,<sup>1</sup> moreover, that other passages of the Old Testament furnish evidence that their writers were acquainted with allied or diverse forms of the creation story which have not been preserved for us. So, too, in the Babylonian records we have other variants of the creation tradition. We will give the most interesting features of these latter here; they will be found collected in fuller form by Jirku,<sup>2</sup> whose order, with one or two omissions, is followed. These texts, except where the contrary is stated, are all in Semitic.

### (A)

A fragment from an incantation text, probably derived from the Ashurbanipal collection.<sup>3</sup> It deals with the fashioning of two small creatures, black and white. The salient feature for us is that it

<sup>1</sup> *Genesis*, pp. 120ff.

<sup>2</sup> Jirku, AK, pp. 12-18.

<sup>3</sup> Transliteration and translation, King, *Creation*, I, pp. 122-125; Rogers, CP, pp. 50f.; Dhorme, *Choix*, pp. 96f. Translations, Gressmann, TuB, I, p. 26; Jirku, AK, p. 12; Weber, *Literatur*, p. 58. Jeremias, OTLA, I, pp. 185f.

relates how the gods in company create the universe (?), the firmament, animated beings, "the cattle of the field, the beasts of the field, the creatures (literally 'swarm') of the city."

## (B)

Forms the introduction to an incantation, found on two New-Babylonian tablets, with slight variations.<sup>1</sup> It is an invocation to "the stream that created everything," the stream itself having been dug by the gods.

## (C)

Is another New-Babylonian text,<sup>2</sup> this time an incantation against toothache. This toothache is supposed to be caused by a worm, and the incantation begins in the house-that-Jack-built manner.

"After Anu created Heaven,  
Heaven created Earth,  
Earth created the Streams,  
The Streams created the Canals,  
The Canals created the Mud,  
The Mud created the Worm."

## (D)

A ritual text,<sup>3</sup> excavated at Babylon. It was used in connection with the ceremonies at the

<sup>1</sup> Transliteration and translation, King, *Creation*, I, pp. 128f. Translations, Gressmann, TuB, I, pp. 30f.; Jirku, AK, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Translations, Gressmann, TuB, I, p. 28; Weber, *Literatur*, pp. 89f.; Jirku, AK, p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Transliteration and translation, Rogers, CP, pp. 44-46. Translations, Gressmann, TuB, I, p. 25; Weber, *Literatur*, pp. 58f.; Jirku, AK, pp. 13f.

restoration of a ruined temple. It records that :

When Anu had created Heaven, and Ea the Ocean, Ea nipped off clay from the Ocean<sup>1</sup> and formed various gods, such as the god of bricks, the god of carpenters, the god of smiths, building materials such as reed and tree, the king to equip the shrine, and men to carry out the cultus.

(E)

" When the earth had been put down, the heavens stretched out,  
 The sun gleamed, fire blazed forth,  
 Water flowed in, the wind blew  
 Then the (servants) of Aruru<sup>2</sup> broke off their pieces,  
 The \* \* \* of the breath of life (their) strides were far."<sup>3</sup>

(F)

From the first tablet<sup>4</sup> of the Gilgamesh Epic.

" When Aruru heard this, she created in her heart a likeness of Anu.<sup>5</sup> Aruru washed her hands, broke off clay, threw it upon the ground,<sup>6</sup> and created Enkidu the valiant."

<sup>1</sup> Rogers: " Ea, in the ocean, broke off the clay." Cf. pp. 146f.

<sup>2</sup> The earth mother-goddess, and patron of child-birth.

<sup>3</sup> The translation is Jirku's.

<sup>4</sup> Transliteration and translation, Dhorme, *Choix*, pp. 188f. Translations, Gressmann, TuB, I, p. 41; Weber, *Literatur*, p. 72; Jirku, AK, p. 14.

<sup>5</sup> So that Enkidu is created "in the likeness" of the god Anu.

<sup>6</sup> Rogers, and Ungnad (in TuB), the latter with some hesitation, render "spat upon it."

## (G)

Relates how the god Enki counsels the other gods that a god should be slain, and man created from the flesh and blood mixed with clay.<sup>1</sup>

## (H)

This text<sup>2</sup> Jeremias describes as more important even than *enuma elish* for comparison with Gen. 1. It is New-Babylonian, bilingual—the Sumerian being the older text—and forms part of an incantation in honour of Ezida, the temple of Nabu at Borsippa.

Before the holy house of the gods had been made, before reeds and trees, bricks and buildings, cities, creatures, the famous shrines, had come into existence, Marduk laid a reed on the face of the waters, created earth and poured it out beside the reed. That he might cause the gods to dwell in the habitation of their heart's desire he created mankind. The goddess Aruru together with him<sup>3</sup> created the seed of mankind. He created the cattle of the field, Tigris and Euphrates, grass, reeds, herbs, lands, marshes, swamps, animals, gardens, woods, cities, buildings.

<sup>1</sup> Jirku, AK, p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Transliteration and translation, Rogers, CP, pp. 47-50; Dhorme, *Choix*, pp. 82-89; King, *Creation*, I, pp. 130-139. Translation, Gressmann, TuB, I, pp. 26-28; Weber, *Literatur*, pp. 56-58; Jeremias, OTLA, I, pp. 142-144; Jirku, AK, pp. 14f.; Clay, *Origin*, pp. 213f.

<sup>3</sup> Does this throw light on the difficult passage, Gen. 4<sup>1</sup>? The prepositions are the same in each passage. If so this would be another illustration of the point made on p. 166, for here a goddess is replaced by a woman.

## (I)

A bilingual text,<sup>1</sup> in which the Sumerian version is the older.

"At the time when Heaven and earth arose out of the deep of the water \* \* \* when ditches, canals, Tigris and Euphrates, were fashioned \* \* Anu, Elil, Shamash, and Ea, the great gods, said (to the Anunnaki), 'What shall we make?' The reply is, 'Let us slay the god Lamga. Out of her (!) blood will we fashion man. The service of the gods shall be their duty'"

On the reverse side, the sense of which is not clear, owing to a lacuna, there is a reference to ox, sheep, beasts of the field, fish, birds, and to "the stars which never alter, in order day and night to complete the festivals of the gods."

## (K)

A Sumerian text.<sup>2</sup>

"Mine, the goddess Nintu's<sup>3</sup> creatures will I lead,  
The people will I lead to its dwelling-place. Let them  
build cities, \* \* prepare for us a pure place \* \* \*  
After Anu, Elil, Enki, Ninharsag<sup>4</sup> had \* \* mankind,  
they caused the beasts, the quadrupeds of the field to  
arise."

<sup>1</sup> The translation is from Jirku, AK, pp. 15f.

<sup>2</sup> Translation from Jirku, AK, p. 16.

<sup>3</sup> Patron goddess of Deltu. Equated later to Ninharsag and to Ishtar.

<sup>4</sup> An earth mother-goddess, who appears as consort of Elil.

## (L)

Extracted from an account of Babylonian beliefs given by Berossus, a Babylonian priest of Bel, who wrote at Babylon c. 300 B.C.

"Bel saw the land uninhabited and unfruitful,<sup>1</sup> and commanded one of the gods to cut off his (=Bel's) head, to mix earth with the blood, and form men and animals. Bel also created the stars, sun, moon, and the five planets."

## (M)

Here may be added also an extract from the legend of Ea and Atrahasis.<sup>2</sup>

"After she<sup>3</sup> had recited her incantation she cast it upon the clay. She pinched off fourteen pieces, placing seven upon the right, and seven upon the left. Between them she placed a brick. \* \* \* Seven and seven mother wombs ; seven formed males and seven formed females. The mother-womb creatress of fate completed them ; yea she caused them to complete (their offspring)<sup>4</sup> in her own likeness. The figures of men Mami formed."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is dubious whether "fruitful" or "unfruitful" should be read. Langdon, *Sumerian Epic*, reads the former, which seems less suited to the context.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Rogers, CP, pp. 113-121 ; Dhorme, *Choix*, pp. 128-130.

<sup>3</sup> i.e., Mami, another name under which the earth-goddess is known.

<sup>4</sup> Or "she completed them."

<sup>5</sup> Strictly speaking this is a re-creation, to people the land after the earlier inhabitants had perished for their sins.

In these various extracts and fragments we find several points of contact with the Biblical records. In Gen. 2<sup>7</sup> we read that God formed man of the "dust of the ground," but breathed into his nostrils a divine element, "the breath of life." The reference to the "breath of life" in (E) is in a context so obscure that we cannot lay any weight upon it : but in (D), (F), (G), (L), and (M), we find gods, a man, or men, created from clay. A divine element goes to the making of man in (G), (I), and (L), but it is more crudely conceived than in the Old Testament account, being blood, or flesh and blood, of a god, as contrasted with the divine breath. Compare too *enuma elish*, the sixth tablet of which records that the materials for the creation of man are furnished from the body of the slain god Kingu. As in this tablet of the Epic the purpose for which man is created is the service of the gods in worship, so also in (I), (H), and (K), the same motive is prominent. Incidentally it may be remarked that the insistence on this motive shows how extremely important was the performance of the cult in Babylonian religion. The point previously made, that in the Old Testament traditions man occupies the place filled by the gods in those of Babylonia, receives further illustration in (D), where gods are created from clay, and as patrons of various crafts, just as in Gen. 4<sup>20-22</sup> men are pioneers in cattle-breeding, music, and smith-work.

One point of contrast between the P and J accounts of creation, is the difference of the part

played in each by water. In P the dry earth emerges from a waste of water, whereas in J the earth is dry and barren for the want of water. As Gunkel neatly puts it,<sup>1</sup> "In the former water is the foe, in the latter the friend." In (I) heaven and earth arise "out of the deep of the water," so that in this respect we have agreement with P. On the other hand, the "stream that creates everything," in (B), recalls rather the '*edh*' of Gen. 2<sup>6</sup>. This is rendered "mist" in the English Bible, but the ancient versions which rendered it by "stream" are more likely to be correct, for it must surely be cognate with the Babylonian *edu*=flood, waves, high-tide, and should be translated by "inundating stream," or something equivalent thereto. The "great stream" of (B) is evidently painted from the model of the Tigris and Euphrates, which form two of the four "heads" into which the river of Gen. 2<sup>10</sup>, "that goes out of Eden," divides itself. The Tigris and Euphrates are prominent features of the creation also in the fragments (H) and (I). Eden has often been compared with a district of the same name on the Euphrates, but is much more likely to be cognate with the Babylonian *edinu*=steppe, so that instead of rendering "a garden in Eden," as Gen. 2<sup>8</sup> does, we should translate "a garden in the steppe," that is, an oasis in contrast with the surrounding

<sup>1</sup> Gunkel, *Genesis*, p. 4. Cf. too a very interesting parallel given by Peake, *The Revelation of John*, pp. 36f. There the friendly part played by the sea god, Poseidon, in the story of Leto, the Python, and the birth of Apollo, is contrasted with the hostile part played by water in Rev. 12<sup>18f</sup>.

wilderness. The antithesis between the "desert" and the "garden of the Lord," Isa. 51<sup>3</sup>, contains the same idea, though the parallel clause shows that already Eden had become a proper name, meaning very much what we ordinarily understand by it.

In Gen. 1 the animals are created before man, the latter appearing as a climax, the chief end of God. In the Eden story man comes first, and the animals are created in an unavailing attempt to provide man with a worthy counterpart. In (H) and (K) we have the same order of creation as in J, first man, and then animals. (A) is difficult to interpret in this respect. But at least we may conclude that these various points of contact make it clear that the J story uses material that is found in the fragmentary Babylonian stories of creation, though there seems to be no cogent evidence of direct connection.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### Paradise and the Fall.

MANY attempts have been made to find in the literature of Babylonia the original sources of the Biblical story of Paradise and the Fall. Just half a century ago George Smith informed the *Daily Telegraph* that he had discovered a cuneiform tablet of surpassing interest, containing the story of man's original innocence, of his temptation and fall. Unfortunately, criticism of his discovery soon proved that he had read into his document what it did not really contain ; so the expectations excited by the announcement were completely disappointed. Even Delitzsch in *Babel und Bibel* only ventured to suggest in a tentative way some parallels for the Biblical records. The most elaborate attempt in this direction has been made by Langdon in his *Sumerian Epic of Paradise, the Flood and the Fall of Man*. The text which he published under this title, described in its colophon as a hymn of praise, he regards as " antedating by at least a thousand years the version in Hebrew." Jastrow thinks the text is certainly not older than 2000 B.C., but admits that it may be a

copy of an older original.<sup>1</sup> If then the claims implicit in Langdon's title are made good we have at last the reward of a long search. A brief summary of the contents of the epic, according to Langdon's interpretation of it, runs as follows :

In Dilmun<sup>2</sup> dwell Enki, the water-god (=Ea), and his consort. Among all the creatures there is peace. Raven and kite utter no raucous cry. Lion and wolf ravage not. There are no sore eyes or aching heads. Neither woman nor man grows old. All the inhabitants are righteous ; no deceiver deceives. Ninellá, daughter and consort of Enki, sings the praise of Dilmun.

(at this point there is a lacuna in the text)  
 Great abundance of water flows upon the land. [Langdon explains that "for some reason which is all too briefly defined Enki, the god of wisdom, became dissatisfied with man, and decided to overwhelm him with his waters."<sup>3</sup> "All too briefly defined" seems to us a very mild way of stating the case. The ground for this assertion must have

<sup>1</sup> Cf. AJSL, 33, p. 143.

<sup>2</sup> The rendering is not absolutely certain. Jastrow has pointed out that the tutelary deity of Dilmun was not Enki, the god prominent in this poem, but Nabu (AJSL, 33, p. 104). He thinks that the site probably intended here is the common source of the Tigris and Euphrates. Nor, if we accept the rendering Dilmun, are we at the end of our uncertainties. Albright (AJSL, 35, p. 182) says that Dilmun has been clearly shown to be Bahrein, an island in the Persian Gulf. This identification was first proposed by Rawlinson. Langdon rejects it emphatically. In his opinion it is a country on the East of the Persian Gulf, South of the 29th degree of latitude, though the name would cover also the islands off the coast. See his lengthy discussion, *Poème Sumérien*, pp. 4-15.

<sup>3</sup> *Sumerian Epic*, p. 6.

subsided into the lacuna. Indeed the whole context undoubtedly creates the impression that the flood, so far from being a punishment, was beneficent.] Enki reveals his plan to Nintud (=the Sumerian earth-goddess) in the reed-house,<sup>1</sup> saying, "cause him to sleep for me" [which Langdon interprets as "cause him to perish"]. Then the fields receive the waters of Enki for nine months. Men become "like fat and tallow." [Langdon interprets this as having reference to the dissolution of man in the waters. But his own translation reads :

" Like fat, like fat, like tallow.<sup>2</sup>  
Nintud mother of the land,  
(even Ninkurra<sup>3</sup>)  
had created them."

And since later on in the translation we find the lines :

" Like fat, like fat, like tallow,  
Ninkurra (like) fat (had created them)."

it is clear on Langdon's own showing that the full stop which follows *tallow* in the former passage should be removed, and the line read not in connection with the mention of the flood which precedes it, but in connection with what follows. Whatever may be the meaning of the cryptic "like fat, like tallow" it is evidently the result of Ninkurra's creating, not a dissolution<sup>4</sup> caused by a vengeful flood from Enki.] Nintud, however,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 214. <sup>2</sup> Jastrow renders " cream." AJSL, 33, p. 114<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> A title of Nintud.

<sup>4</sup> Jastrow points out that as a matter of fact fat and tallow do not dissolve in water, and also that there is no mention of mankind in the context. AJSL, 33, p. 114<sup>2</sup>.

was "not wroth against the sons of men who were pious." Rather abruptly a new character appears.

" My king<sup>1</sup> the terror filled, the terror filled,  
 His foot alone on the ship had set.<sup>2</sup>  
 Two ' humbles '<sup>3</sup> as watchmen on guard he had placed.  
 Doubly he had caulked the ship ; torches he had lighted."<sup>4</sup>

Again the description of the flood is repeated. After the cessation of the waters Ninkurra reveals to the divine Tag-tug [another rather abruptly introduced personage, interpreted by Langdon as the hero who had escaped from the flood] secrets. Later Enki in his temple also reveals secrets to the divine Tag-tug,<sup>4</sup> who now describes himself as a gardener. Then Ninkurra gives commands to "my king" concerning various types of plants, seven in number, that he may not cut or pluck and eat. But he eats the cassia plant, whose "fate she had determined," and the goddess in the name of Enki utters a curse, "The face of life until he dies not shall he see." [Another very cryptic sentence of which, according to Langdon, the correct exegesis is "freedom from disease shall he no longer have."]

<sup>1</sup> Jastrow saw that this personage is not, as Langdon originally supposed, a new character, but merely Enki under a new name (*op. cit.*, p. 97). Langdon accepted the correction.

<sup>2</sup> Jastrow renders, "He made straightway for the boat."

<sup>3</sup> i.e., attendants or slaves, but Langdon admits that his curious rendering is quite uncertain.

<sup>4</sup> Jastrow prefers to render *Takku*.

" The Anunnaki in the dust sat down (to weep).  
Angrily unto Enlil she spoke,  
' I, Ninharsag,<sup>1</sup> begat thee children, and what is my  
reward ? '

The gods then create divine patrons of healing and various arts to comfort and aid man under his burden of toil and disease.

The points of comparison with the Garden of Eden story which Langdon finds are chiefly the idyllic state which his version portrays at the beginning, and the eating of a forbidden fruit in a garden. A reader of the translation as Langdon himself gives it cannot help feeling that most of the parallelism which the author finds with the Old Testament has to be read into the text. To take first the two points just referred to. The state of idyllic peace, so reminiscent of the descriptions of the Messianic reign of peace which we find in Isaiah, is probably a misinterpretation. The lines such as "the raven shrieked not," "the lion slew not," probably mean that the raven and the lion did not yet exist. The scene, that is to say, is not a Paradise, but a land uninhabited by man and beast. Further, that cassia should have been a forbidden plant is, seeing what a very prominent part it plays in Babylonian medicine, antecedently unlikely. In his French edition of the text Langdon has readily acknowledged an error here, and recognizes that the cassia is really an eighth plant which it is permitted to use, and that the interdicted plant is not named.

<sup>1</sup> A further title for Nintud.

Again the language used of the flood :

“The fields received the waters of Enki.

It was the first day whose month is the first  
It was the second day whose month is the second<sup>1</sup>

[and so on down to]

It was the ninth day whose month is the ninth ; month of the cessation of the waters.”

is much more naturally interpreted of successive inundations than of a deluge lasting nine months. Jastrow’s interpretation of the text as successive monthly fertilizing inundations, procured by a symbolic fertilizing action on the part of the god and goddess, seems much more plausible. Further, the inundation passage is thrice repeated, each time in connection with a different incident, which is hardly to be expected of a deluge lasting nine months. Nor is Langdon’s attempt<sup>2</sup> to demonstrate a philological equation between the names Tag-tug and Noah absolutely convincing. In spite of the fact that the French edition maintains the author’s original position essentially, in face of all the criticism to which the earlier edition had been subjected, and certainly in some points justifies it

<sup>1</sup> Langdon, by an obvious slip, gives “third.”

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Poème Sumérien*, pp. 148-156. Langdon himself admits that the explanation he proposes is not certain. He produces here some new evidence for his rendering *Tag-tug*, which appears to be convincing. Some interesting evidence furnished by Scheil seems to show that *Tag-tug* means “fuller,” and points to the craft he followed before he became king—for there is no doubt that the personage of the myth is drawn from an historical king of the same name.

by new evidence, we feel that, allowing the author's readings to be less precarious than his critics assert, even upon his own rendering his interpretation of the text is improbable.<sup>1</sup>

At present, then, we think it is still true that no complete parallel to the Paradise story has been found in Babylonian literature. But while this is so, it is possible to find parallels more or less close to certain motifs that occur in the Old Testament story. We have already spoken of Eden, and the river of Paradise.<sup>2</sup> Have we any clear parallel to Paradise itself? Jeremias does not hesitate to say<sup>3</sup> that we "meet with many Babylonian presentations of a Paradise in which the divinity dwells, also man, who stands in close relation to the divinity." Perhaps the most striking illustrations are to be found in the Epic of Gilgamesh. In his search for Ut-napishtim the hero, after travelling eleven double hours through the darkness, came at last to a wonderful garden, by the sea-shore, where mighty trees, bearing for fruit lapis-lazuli and gems, grew. The trees are described almost in the words of Genesis as "good to look upon." Here was enthroned the goddess Siduru-Sabitu. From her he learns the way across the dreadful waters of death to the Elysium where dwells Ut-napishtim, the immortal. Unlike the land of Dilmun, which is generally located in the

<sup>1</sup> Langdon's theories were subjected to severe criticism by Jastrow, Barton, Prince, Ungnad, King, Witzel. On the other side see Mercer, JSOR, III, pp. 86-88.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. p. 177.

<sup>3</sup> Jeremias, OTLA, I, p. 255.

Persian Gulf, this Elysium seems to be beyond the Mediterranean, out in the Atlantic Ocean. But, though we find on the shore of this sea wonderful gardens with magic trees, there is no parallel to the story of such a garden as the original dwelling-place of the first human pair.

The belief in a tree whose fruit confers life is very widespread in the ancient traditions. Ut-napishtim knows of a magic plant growing at the bottom of the ocean, whose name is, "The old man shall renew his youth." What plant is intended by this has been the subject of much controversy: it has been plausibly supposed to be coral. There are, too, in the texts frequent references to the "plant of life" which the gods possess. In one hymn Marduk is himself described as the "plant of life." An Assyrian letter, cited by Harper,<sup>1</sup> contains the expression, "we were dead dogs: the king hath revived us by laying the plant of life on our nose." This may possibly throw some light on the strange passage in Ezekiel<sup>2</sup> where it is said that the sun-worshippers "put the branch to their nose." The deep sleep into which Adam was cast has its parallel in the sleep where-with Ea "caused Apshu to slumber, bewitching the sleep."

The representation on a Babylonian seal-cylinder, which has been frequently cited in this connection, has little bearing, if any, on the story of the Fall.

<sup>1</sup> *Assyrian Letters*, p. 771.

<sup>2</sup> 8<sup>17</sup>. Cf. Peake's *Commentary*, p. 507, for references to Zoroastrian parallels.

According to Delitzsch<sup>1</sup> it pictures a tree with hanging fruit: "On the right is the man, to be recognized by the horns, the symbol of strength; on the left the woman; both reaching out their hands to the fruit. And behind the woman is a serpent." Even on this basis all Delitzsch ventures to suggest is, "Should there not be a connection between this and the Biblical story of the Fall?" Some critics have denied that the tortuous line behind the woman represents a serpent at all: it may be merely an ornamental filling up of the design.<sup>2</sup> On this detail, however, we think Delitzsch is quite right in the view that it represents a serpent. But when we reflect that, in the first place, the horned figure is indubitably a god, secondly, that there is absolutely no warrant for stating that the other figure is a woman—it much more probably also represents a divinity—and, thirdly, that both figures are seated and *clothed*, looking at the tree, with the serpent *behind* the figure said to represent the woman, what likeness to the Biblical story is left?

The serpent as guardian of a sacred or magic tree is a familiar figure in mythology; it appears often, too, as an enemy of man. The nearest approach in this respect to the Biblical idea is found in the Gilgamesh Epic, where the wonderful plant which the hero has obtained after so much travail, and which he hopes to bring back with him to Erech that he may renew his life, is stolen

<sup>1</sup> Delitzsch, BB, p. 56.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Gressmann TuB, II, p. 107.

from him by a serpent.<sup>1</sup> The “incense altar” discovered by Sellin at Taanach has upon it a representation of a boy wrestling with a serpent, and, in a separate place, a relief of the “tree of life.” To bring these into intimate connection with the Old Testament story, as has been done, seems hazardous in the extreme.

Perhaps the most illuminating parallel of all is to be found in the Adapa myth. In this is related how Adapa, having, in a passion, broken the wing of the South wind, is summoned to appear before Anu. Ea gives Adapa counsel, bidding him clothe himself in a mourning garment. The purpose of this expedient is that he may gain the sympathy of the gods Tammuz and Gishzida, who have disappeared from the earth and now guard the entrance to Anu’s palace, by pretending that he wears the garment as a token of mourning for them. This will dispose them to intercede with Anu for the delinquent. Ea warns him that when he comes into the presence of Anu he will be offered “food of death” and “water of death.” These he must on no account eat. On the other hand he may invest himself with the garments which will be set before him, and anoint himself with the oil offered. Up to a point all works “according to plan.” Tammuz and Gishzida are well disposed. But Anu seems to change his original intention, taking the view that since Ea has revealed so much to Adapa the latter may as well have the boon of immortality conferred

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 100.

upon him. So, instead of deadly food and water, he is offered "food of life" and "water of life." But, under the impression that these are the deadly food and water against which Ea had warned him, Adapa carries out his original instructions and declines them, though he clothes himself with the garments provided and anoints himself with the oil. Anu "looked at him, wondered at him. 'Come, Adapa, why hast thou not eaten, why hast thou not drunken? Thou shalt not live.'" Adapa explains that he has carried out Ea's instructions, and Anu, apparently more in sorrow than in anger, says, "Take him, and bring him back to his earth." So Adapa loses his chance of immortality when it was actually within his grasp.<sup>1</sup>

Clearly we have here a point of contact with the Old Testament in the idea that the partaking of a certain food will confer upon a mortal the boon of immortality. The parallelism is often extended further than this. For example, Jirku says<sup>2</sup> that Ea deliberately deceived Adapa so that Adapa might not obtain the gift, and compares Gen. 3<sup>22</sup>, where Yahweh is fearful lest man, having become "as one of us" in knowledge, should eat of the fruit of the tree of life and live for ever. This view seems to meet with a large measure of acceptance. Jeremias, noting the suggestion contained

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Frazer, FLOT I. p. 65. "The belief is widespread in Africa that God at one time purposed to make mankind immortal, but that the benevolent scheme miscarried through the fault of the messenger to whom he had entrusted the gospel message."

<sup>2</sup> Jirku, AK, p. 25.

in the serpent's words, Gen. 3<sup>5</sup>, of the "envy of God," finds<sup>1</sup> a very close parallel with the myth of Adapa: Jastrow, too, writes,<sup>2</sup> "God, while as anxious as Ea to keep man from eating of the tree of life, cautions Adam against the act, whereas Ea practises a deception in order to prevent man from eating." But, with all respect to these eminent authorities, surely the whole tenor of the legend is against the idea that Ea deliberately deceived his favourite, Adapa, for whom he had done so much. The interpretation of Dhorme and Rogers, that the substitution of life-giving for death-dealing food was due to a change of mind by Anu, quite unanticipated by Ea, is much more plausible. If so, not the envy of Ea, but sheer "irony," was the cause of Adapa's misfortune.

Sayce endeavoured to find another very close link by asserting<sup>3</sup> that the names Adapa and Adam are philological equivalents, in short that Adapa might actually be read as "Adam." It is true that the sign for *pa*, the last syllable of Adapa's name, has, though not very often, also the value *mu*. But Langdon has conclusively disproved<sup>4</sup> Sayce's contention by producing examples where the name Adapa is written *Adapad*. The attempt to make, as Stucken does, a relation between the garment given to Adapa by the gods and the clothing furnished to Adam and Eve by God, may

<sup>1</sup> Jeremias, OTLA, I, p. 184.

<sup>2</sup> Jastrow, *Religion*, p. 551. Cf. also Skinner, *Genesis*, p. 92.

<sup>3</sup> Sayce, *Archæology of the Cuneiform Inscriptions*, p. 91.

<sup>4</sup> Langdon, *Sumerian Epic*, p. 64.

be dismissed as unworthy of serious consideration. And in any case Adapa was not the first man : the Babylonian document tells us that Ea created Adapa "among men" (*ina ameluti*).

In view of the fact that a fragment of the Legend of Adapa is among the documents recovered at Tell-el-Amarna, and that therefore the legend must have traversed Canaan by the middle of the second millennium B.C., any correspondence found in it would be significant. But examination of the alleged parallels shows that actually the only idea common to the Myth of Adapa and the story of Paradise is the conception of a food that confers immortality. This conception is much too widespread for us to deduce from it that there is any direct dependence of the Biblical story on the Myth.

A somewhat remote correspondence to the idea that sexual knowledge deprives man of innocence and felicity (Gen. 3<sup>8</sup>), may be found in the Gilgamesh Epic. The men of Erech, finding the dominion of Gilgamesh tyrannous, prayed the gods to create a rival who might deliver them from his power. At the bidding of the gods Aruru made a male creature in the image of Anu. His name was Enkidu, and he lived among the animals, eating vegetables as they did, and drinking water. He was mighty in strength, but the animals trusted him completely and treated him as one of themselves. Then a hunter whose snares he had broken, and whose victims he had released, procured a harlot, to whose guile Enkidu fell an easy prey.

Upon his return to his home in the woods "the gazelles ran away, the creatures of the wild removed themselves far from him." He lost the life of rustic felicity and was compelled to go to the city life of Erech.

The cherubim of Gen. 3<sup>24</sup> are obviously akin to the monstrosities, part human, part animal, that are found as guardians at the entrances of palaces and temples. Such figures are of frequent occurrence in Babylonian, but also in Egyptian, Aramaic, Canaanite, and Hittite art.<sup>1</sup> It may very well be that the conception came to Israel by way of Canaan from Babylon. The attempt to find the name of the Cherub in cuneiform was often essayed, as, for instance, by Lenormant, but in vain; eventually, however, Assyrian inscriptions were found at Susa in which the colossal bulls are called *karibati*. Even this fact, however, falls short of a demonstration that the Hebrew word was borrowed from Babylonia.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the numerous examples given in Gressmann, TuB, II, pp. 86-97, and the plates in Ball's *Light from the East*.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### The Ante-Diluvians.

**A** MOST interesting, but exceedingly difficult, problem is presented by the lists of the ante-diluvian patriarchs. Gen. 5 contains a formal and complete list, which is obviously derived from the P stratum. A brief summary of it gives us the following table :

(A)

Adam ..	..	930 years.
Seth ..	..	912 years.
Enosh	..	905 years.
Kenan	..	910 years.
Mahalel	..	895 years
Jared ..	..	962 years.
Enoch	..	365 years.
Methuselah	..	969 years.
Lamech	..	777 years.
Noah ..	..	950 years (Gen. 9 <sup>29</sup> ).

In Gen. 4<sup>17-22</sup> we have a list of six generations with a single name in each, followed by a generation with three names. This list, which is much fuller of colour than (A), is almost universally assigned to the J source. It runs

## (B)

Cain  
Enoch  
Irad  
Mehujael  
Methushael  
Lamech

Jabal ; Jubal ; Tubal-cain.

Gen. 4<sup>25f</sup>. also generally assigned to J, but to a different stratum within J, gives us a fragment of a third list :

## (C)

Adam  
Seth  
Enosh.

To this fragment Gunkel would add<sup>1</sup> Gen. 5<sup>29</sup>, as its conclusion, so that it, too, would end with Noah.

The inter-relations of (A), (B), and (C) provide a most delicate and intricate problem, into which we can hardly enter here. It will be observed that the six single names of (B) are essentially the same as the names from the fourth to the ninth of (A), with slight variation of order. Probably the intention of (C) is that Cain is to be regarded as fourth on the list, as Kenan (=Cain) is fourth in (A). If so, from (B) and (C) combined we could construct a list of ten names, equivalent to the ten in (A), but with the fifth and seventh names transposed ; the general conclusion being that

<sup>1</sup> Gunkel, *Genesis*, p. 55.

the P and J documents each present us with a tradition, with slight variants, of ten ante-diluvian patriarchs.

Turning now to the Babylonian records we find that they too divide history into an ante-diluvian and a post-diluvian period. Further, as is the case with so many peoples, they give the number of the kings who reigned in the mythical prehistoric period as ten. The tradition as preserved by Berossus has long been familiar. It gives the names and years of the kings before the Flood as :

(D)

'Aloros	..	..	36000
'Alaporos	..	..	10800
'Amelon	..	..	46800
'Ammenon	..	..	43200
Megalaros	..	..	64800
Daonos (variant Daos)			36000
Euedorachos	..	..	64800
'Amempsinos			36000
'Otiartes	..	..	28800
Xisouthros	..	..	64800

A comparison of the Berossus list with those of the Old Testament has led to some sweeping general statements. Delitzsch, for example, asserted<sup>1</sup> that "The ten Babylonian ante-diluvian kings have also been admitted into the Bible, and figure as the ten ante-diluvian patriarchs, with various points of agreement as to details." Gunkel makes a much more cautious statement:<sup>2</sup> he thinks the two

<sup>1</sup> Delitzsch, BB, p. 47.<sup>2</sup> Gunkel, *Genesis*, pp. 131f.

traditions are “closely related”; they agree in the time when these men lived, in the number ten, in that each has a very great number of years assigned to him, and in the fact that the name with which each tradition ends is the name of the hero of the Deluge story.<sup>1</sup> He discusses also supposed points of correspondence between individual names—a matter to which we will return—and concludes that “the Hebrew tradition has been derived from the Babylonian,” but that the Babylonian names have been drastically edited, “either translated or replaced by the names of Hebrew personages.” The supposition will be that the tradition came to Israel with the Deluge story itself, perhaps in two different forms, the older one being represented by the J lists.

Attempts of great, if somewhat perverse, ingenuity have been made to relate names in these Hebrew lists to those of Berossus, and some attempts at explanations of names in Berossus which were never even plausible. Among the latter may be counted the assertion<sup>2</sup> that 'Aloros, the first *king*, is a corruption of Aruru, the mother-goddess! 'Alaporus=Adapa=Adam was another equation that met with favour. The latter part of this equation has been discussed above; Clay's comment that it is reminiscent of Voltaire's dictum describing etymology as “a science in which the vowels amount to nothing and the consonants to very little” is hardly too severe. Very much more attractive was the suggestion that 'Amelon might

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 197.

<sup>2</sup> Jeremias, OTLA, I, p. 239.

be a corruption of the Babylonian *amelu*=man, which would answer very neatly to the name in the corresponding place in the Old Testament lists, for Enosh too means "man." 'Ammenon was said to be a corruption of the Babylonian *ummanu*=master-craftsman, foreman: this was supposed to be represented in translation by Cain and Kenan, either of which may possibly mean "smith." Even King, whose cautious treatment of the whole question has been wonderfully justified by subsequent discovery, went so far as to say,<sup>1</sup> "few will be disposed to dispute the equation Daonos *poimen*<sup>2</sup>=Etana, a shepherd. Each list preserves the hero's shepherd origin, and the correspondence of the names is very close, Daonos merely transposing the initial vowel of Etana." Euedorachos was equated to Enmeduranki, a Babylonian hero renowned as a favourite of the gods and possessor of wisdom. 'Amempsinos was supposed, with less confidence, to be a corruption of Amel-Sin=man of Sin (the moon-god), and compared with Methushael=man of God, or with Methuselah=man of the (god?) Shelah.<sup>3</sup> In 'Otiartes, regarded as a misspelling for 'Opertes, was discovered Ubar-tutu, the father of the Babylonian deluge hero Xisouthros. The last-mentioned name is generally agreed to be a transposition of Atra-hasis, an epithet (=very wise) of Ut-napishtim, the deluge hero himself.

<sup>1</sup> King, *Legends*, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> Daonos is described by Berossus as *poimen* =shepherd.

<sup>3</sup> Gunkel, *Genesis*, p. 132.

Recently fresh evidence has come to light which enables us to test some of these proposed identifications. In the Weld-Blundell collection of the Ashmolean Museum Langdon discovered a prism containing dynastic lists of the kings of Sumer and Akkad, which he dates *c.* 2089 B.C. This gives the list :<sup>1</sup>

(E)		
Name.	City.	Years.
Alulim	Eridu	28800
Alagar	Eridu	36000
Enmenluanna	Badtibira	43200
Enmengalanna	Badtibira	28800
Dumuzi-sib	Badtibira	36000
Ensibzianna	Larak	28800
Enmenduranna	Sippar	21000
Ubardudu	Shuruppak	18600

Then follows the Deluge. It will be noted that here we have eight kings, not ten, and that the king immediately preceding the Deluge is Ubar-dudu, father of Ut-napishtim, the latter not being mentioned. Another tablet in the same collection<sup>2</sup> gives the name of ten ante-diluvian kings.

(F)		
Name.	City.	Years.
Alulim	Habur (=Eridu)	67200
Alagar	Habur	72000
? ?	Ellasar	72000
? ?	Ellasar	21600

<sup>1</sup> Cf. OECT, II, p. 2, W-B 444. <sup>2</sup> OECT, II, p. 2. W-B 62.

Name.	City.	Years.
Dumuzi-sib	Badtibira	28800
Enmenluanna	Badtibira	21600
Ensibzianna	Larak	36000
Enmenduranna	Sippar	72000
Arad-gin	Shuruppak	28800
Ziusuddu	Shuruppak	36000

This list comes apparently from Ellasar, and the number of ten is made up by the insertion of two undecipherable names of kings whose seat was at Ellasar, in order to glorify the city of its origin. Ziusuddu is the same as Xisouthros. The very great similarity in detail points to a common origin for the traditions embodied in (E) and (F). It will be observed that the total number of years in the latter is almost twice as great as that in the former. The variations in order are very like the variations in the Biblical lists. Langdon would reconstruct the tradition underlying (E) and (F) by adding to the former the last two names from the latter, so making an original list of ten names. This would, of course, introduce Aradgin between Ubardudu and Ziusuddu, and Langdon makes the interesting suggestion that the name 'Ardates which is found as a variant to 'Otiartes in (D) is really the ninth name, for which he makes room by deleting Megalaros from the list. This would give, he thinks, as the original traditions lying behind the Weld-Blundell documents and Berossus respectively :—

(G) Weld-Blundell.	(H) Berossus.
Alulim.	Aloros.
Alagar.	Alaporos.
Enmenluanna.	Amelon.
Enmengalanna.	Ammenon.
Dumuzi-sib.	Daos (which appears as variant to Daonos in (D)).
Ensibzianna.	Amempsinos.
Enmenduranna.	Euedorachus.
Ubardudu.	Opartes.
Arad-gin.	Ardates.
Ziusuddu.	Sisythes.

Even though we may not accept all the details of Langdon's conclusion certain points seem reasonably clear. The two names at the beginning of (H) are transformations of the two corresponding names in (G), the Γ of the second having been corrupted to Π in the Greek text. The plausible explanations for the third and fourth names of (H), mentioned above, vanish into thin air. Amelon has nothing whatever to do with *amelu*, but is a transformation of Enmenluanna, and similarly Ammenon seems to be developed from Enmengalanna with loss of the syllable *gal*. But with the explanations disappear also the connections which suggested that the Hebrew Enosh and Kenan-Cain are translations of Babylonian names. Even King's equation of Daonos, shepherd, with Etana fares no better. Dumuzi is, of course, the Sumerian form of Tammuz, so that Dumuzi-sib means,

"Tammuz, shepherd." The Babylonians themselves shortened Dumuzi in pronunciation to Duuz,<sup>1</sup> and this shortened form is reproduced in the Daos of Berossus. Sayce has suggested that the original Greek of the longer form in Berossus, Daonos, was Daozos, the difference in Greek being merely that between N and Z Langdon thinks the explanation very probable.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand the identification of Euedorachos with Enmeduranki remains possible: the sign for *na* is similar to that for *ki*, and Enmeduranki may have been miswritten Enmeduranna. That several other names on the list end in "anna" may be used as an argument on either side. It makes it probable that the name we are discussing ended so too, but it also makes plausible the suggestion that our name may have been accidentally assimilated to the others. The relation between 'Opates and Ubardudu is also confirmed. The conclusion, then, is that the names of Berossus rest upon a purely Sumerian as distinct from a Semitic Babylonian base, and that there is absolutely no etymological connection between the names of the Old Testament and the Babylonian lists. Clay has endeavoured to show<sup>3</sup> that the Berossus names are really of Amorite origin. He explains 'Alorus as "El Uru," Uru being an Amorite deity whose name appears often in the composition of early Babylonian names. Clay manages to discover the element *Ur* in five of the names given

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Langdon, *Tammuz and Ishtar*, p. 2<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. OECT, II, p. 3<sup>2</sup>.      <sup>3</sup> Cf. Clay, *Origin*, pp. 129-138.

by Berossus. The publication of the Weld-Blundell document 444<sup>1</sup> renders his arguments, which were already hazardous, even more precarious.

Returning to our main point, we may say that investigation shows that all we can regard as being certainly common to the Babylonian and Old Testament traditions of the ante-diluvians is that there were ten of them, that they enjoyed great longevity, and that the last of them escaped from the Deluge. In its remaining details the Old Testament tradition seems to be quite independent of the Babylonian.

<sup>1</sup> i.e., list (E).

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## CHAPTER IX.

### The Deluge.

THE number of Babylonian documents which record a story of the Deluge, or perhaps it would be better to say, a deluge, is considerable; unfortunately some of them have survived only in a fragmentary condition. The most important of these are:

#### (A)

An early version<sup>1</sup> of the Atrahasis Epic. This is the only deluge tablet that is exactly dated. Its colophon records that it was written on the twenty-eighth day of Shabatu (that is, the eleventh month) of the eleventh year of Ammizaduga. According to Clay<sup>2</sup> this would be 1966 B.C., but on the basis of Fotheringham's calculation previously mentioned<sup>3</sup> the date would be c. 1911-1910. Clay estimates that the original from which it was copied may be two thousand years older still. It is another of the numerous treasures that we owe to the industry

<sup>1</sup> First published by Scheil, *Recueil de Travaux*, XX, 55ff. Transliteration and translation: Rogers, CP, pp. 105ff.; Dhorme, *Choix*, pp. 120ff. Translation: Gressmann, TuB, I, pp. 57f.; Clay, *Deluge*, pp. 58ff.

<sup>2</sup> Clay, *Deluge*, p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. p. 23.

with which Ashurbanipal collected Babylonian literature. The writing is Semitic cuneiform, but unhappily the tablet is broken, so that but a fragment remains.

The portions which have been preserved of the first two columns tell of the multiplication of the people, and apparently of plague and famine which are to destroy them. Adad figures as the prominent deity. In columns seven and eight, the only others of which parts are left, Ea speaks of the flood (*abubu*) which has been commanded, and in his utterance the words

“ Let them go into (the ship ?) \* \* \*  
The ship-mast (or bolts) ”

are traceable. The name of the hero also remains—Atramhasis. So fragmentary are the remnants of the document that apart from the other deluge tablets it would be quite obscure. In Clay's view there is “absolutely nothing to suggest the idea that it had originally been written in Sumerian.”<sup>1</sup> He is confident that the original must have been an Amorite legend. Certainly the god who is so prominent, Adad, was an Amorite deity. He contends also that the tablet contains a number of Amorite words not in current use in Babylonian Semitic. Of especial interest in this respect is the word *teina*=fig-tree, which is a good Hebrew word, but not the Babylonian name for fig-tree. Indeed the fig-tree itself was as rare in Babylonia, as it was common in Palestine. The purpose of these arguments is, of course, to support Clay's opinion

<sup>1</sup> Clay, *Deluge*, p. 18.

that the Deluge story is not, as is commonly assumed, of Babylonian, but rather of Amorite origin.

## (B)

Our next document,<sup>1</sup> first published by Hilprecht, is also but a fragment. It was supposed to come from Nippur, but there is considerable doubt on this point. Hilprecht himself dated it *c.* 2100; Rogers thinks it may possibly be as late as 1700. Jastrow gives his opinion that it is much later than (A), probably by five centuries.

Only about a dozen partially decipherable lines remain. A deity, Ellil according to Clay, but in Jastrow's opinion Ea, speaks of a coming deluge (*abubu*), gives commands as to the building of a great ship, speaks of protecting it with a "great cover," of "beasts of the field," and "fowl of the heaven." The name of the person addressed, like that of the god speaking, has been lost, but was more probably Atrahasis than Ut-napishtim. The line following the reference to beast and birds ends with *ku-um mi-ni*. Hilprecht and Clay find here a parallel to *l'minehu*=after its kind (Gen. 6<sup>20</sup>). This is disputed by Jastrow, who takes *um-mi-ni* as one word=workman. Compare (C), which speaks of *um-ma-ni*=craftsmen, and (F), where Ut-napishtim is bidden to take *um-ma-a-ni* with him into his vessel.

<sup>1</sup> Transliteration and translation: Rogers, CP, pp. 108f.  
Translation: Clay, *Deluge*, pp. 81f.; Jastrow, HBT, p. 343.

## (C)

This is a fragment<sup>1</sup> recovered from the Ashurbanipal archives. Jastrow thinks it belongs to the same category as (A), and that it is not improbably a part of the version to which (B) belongs. In quantity it is about as extensive as (B), but much better preserved.

Ea is speaking, and giving instructions about the making of a boat. It continues :

“ \*\*\* the time I will send thee.

\*\*\* enter and close the door of the ship.”

The ship is to be loaded with the grain and property of the hero, his relatives, craftsmen, cattle of the field, the beasts of the field “as many as devour grass.”<sup>2</sup> Atrahasis, who is definitely named here, objects that he has never built a ship, and asks Ea to draw him a plan on the ground, so that he may work from it. Ea complies with his request. This latter feature is interesting, and suggests that the version is attempting to explain what had earlier been a difficulty, the problem as to how Atrahasis was able to plan and build the wonderful ship. If so this version will be one of the later ones. The restriction of the beasts of the field to “as many as devour grass,” if that rendering be right, points in the same direction. It solves the problem of feeding the animals during the voyage, and lessens the difficulty caused to

<sup>1</sup> Transliteration and translation : Rogers, CP, pp. 103ff.; Dhorme, *Choix*, pp. 126f. Translation : Gressmann, TuB, I, p. 57; Jeremias, OTLA, I, p. 253; Jastrow, HBT, p. 343.

<sup>2</sup> Another rendering is “ all kinds of herbs.”

the rationalistic mind by the picture of the lion dwelling peacefully with the sheep. The fulness of detail, if we may argue from the fragment that survives, also supports the view that this version will be one of the latest.

## (D)

This is a Nippur tablet,<sup>1</sup> in Sumerian, belonging to the Pennsylvania University collection. It was first published by Poebel, who dated it 1900-1850 B.C. It is in the same text from which the (K) creation story<sup>2</sup> comes.

This forms part of a continuous narrative which begins with the creation and seems in that respect to be analogous to the collection of traditions in Gen. 1-11. The name of the hero is Ziugiddu. The name of the city in which he dwelt has vanished, but presumably it was Shuruppak, the last mentioned of the cities whose creation is recorded in the earlier part of the document. Ziugiddu appears to have been an eminently pious man :

“ In humility he prostrates himself, in reverence  
Daily he stands in attendance.”

He hears a god, who, though the name is not preserved, was doubtless Ea, addressing him :

“ At the wall on my left hand stand.  
At the wall I will speak a word unto thee.  
My holy one, give heed to me.  
By our \* \* \* a flood will be sent,  
To destroy the seed of mankind.”

<sup>1</sup> Translation : Clay. *Deluge*, pp. 69ff.; Jastrow, HBT, pp. 338f.; Jirku, AK, pp. 34f. (in part).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. p. 174.

The deluge lasts for seven days and nights, a great wind driving the “great boat”—an unusual word, the same that is found in (B)—before it. Afterwards Ziugiddu sacrifices an ox and a sheep, and is granted an eternal soul like that of a god, and caused to dwell in a distant land, which Clay reads as Dilmun.

This version corresponds closely to (F), though it is much briefer. Some episodes contained in the latter are missing from the former, and there are points of greater and less variation. In (F), as we shall see, the deluge lasts not seven, but six, days. Further, the story here is told in the third person, whereas in (F) the first person is used. The name of the hero, too, is different. Clay asserts that it is the only version in which the name Atrahasis is not used. He writes Zi-u-suddu<sup>1</sup> instead of Ziugiddu, and renders it, “He who lengthened the days of life” (“or something similar”). He takes the use of this title instead of the name to be proof that the version is borrowed from a Semitic legend, and calls it “a Sumerian paraphrase.” He thinks, however, that in the process some features of Sumerian tradition have been introduced, for instance, the reference to Dilmun. While Jastrow takes the view that the Sumerian language points to the high antiquity of the version, Clay explains that it was written in Sumerian not because it was ancient, but because during the second half of the

<sup>1</sup> This rendering is adopted also by King and Langdon; it was originally suggested by Zimmern. The meaning of the name is the same in either case. Cf. p. 199.

third millennium B.C. Sumerian was the general literary language of certain Babylonian cities. He points out that nearly every inscription of this period from Nippur is written in Sumerian, while in some neighbouring cities such as Sippar this was not the case.

## (E)

The version of Berossus records that after the death of Ardates his son Xisouthros<sup>1</sup> reigned 64800 years. The god Kronos (=Bel) appeared to him in a dream, and warned him of a coming deluge. He bade him inter at Sippar a written account of "the beginning, middle, and end of all things," build a boat for himself, his relatives and friends, birds and beasts. If he should be questioned he is to say that he is sailing to the gods to seek favour for mankind. The deluge quickly<sup>2</sup> ceases, and Xisouthros lets certain of the birds fly. They return, finding no foothold. A second time he sends forth birds, and once more they return, but this time with clay adhering to their feet. A third time he sends out the birds, and this time they do not return. Xisouthros, ascertaining that the vessel has grounded on a mountain, accordingly emerges from the ship, accompanied by his wife, his daughter, and the pilot. He erects an altar, and offers sacrifice. Then, with his three companions, he vanishes from sight. A voice from heaven informs those left aboard the ship that Xisouthros,

<sup>1</sup> Generally interpreted as an inversion of Atra-hasis.

<sup>2</sup> A variant of the Berossus tradition says that the rain ceased on the third day.

because of his piety, has gone to dwell with the gods. They are bidden return to Babylon, and recover the writings which had been interred at Sippar. The voice informs them that the place where they have landed belongs to Armenia. " Of the boat \* \* \* some part still remains there \* \* and people get pitch from the boat by scraping it off."

## (F)

This deluge story<sup>1</sup> forms the eleventh of the twelve tablets which contain the Gilgamesh Epic. The text was found in the Ashurbanipal archives but was copied from very considerably older originals. The deluge story is obviously an independent tradition which has been most ingeniously worked into the Epic. Gilgamesh, after a perilous voyage, has made his way to the place where Ut-napishtim, the mortal who has attained immortality, lives in unchanging felicity. The latter tells the story of the deluge in answer to the inquiry of Gilgamesh as to how the boon of immortality has been gained.

The city Shuruppak, on the Euphrates, was very old, and the gods within it (instigated, it would seem, by Ellil) determined to send a deluge. Ea, who was one of their council, desiring to save Utnapishtim, repeated the plan to the " reed hut " and wall, adding instructions

<sup>1</sup> Transliteration and translation : Rogers, CP, pp. 89-102 ; Dhorme, *Choix*, pp. 100-119. Translations : Gressmann, TuB, I, pp. 50-57 ; *The Babylonian Story of the Deluge and the Epic of Gilgamish*. BM.

that his favourite should abandon his house, build a ship, and put aboard it specimens of all living creatures. Ut-napishtim duly promises Ea that he will carry out the instructions, but asks how he shall explain his strange conduct to the inhabitants of the city. Ea tells him to say that, having incurred the hatred of Ellil, he is going an ocean voyage to dwell with Ea, and that Ellil will send a plenteous rain, with catches of birds and fish, for the city. A lacuna in the text is followed by a description of the ship Ut-napishtim built. It is 120 cubits high on each side, in six stories, with numerous sub-divisions, and caulked with bitumen within and without. The workmen are encouraged by daily feasts of lambs and bullocks, and beer and wine which flow like river water. The ship is loaded with gold and silver, cattle, the family of the builder, specimens of wild beasts, and all kinds of craftsmen. Shamash, the sun-god, appoints the time when Ut-napishtim is to enter the ship, and close the door. Among the craftsmen aboard was Puzur-Amurru, a sailor, to whom, very sensibly, Ut-napishtim makes over the charge of the voyage. The gods send terrible storms of thunder, lightning, and rain. The deluge (*abubu*) covers the mountains and the very gods in dread ascend into the highest heaven of Anu, where they cower like dogs. Ishtar cries "like a woman in travail," and repents that in the divine assembly she has counselled

this evil. The gods huddle together in abject terror for six days and six nights. On the seventh day the storm ceases, and the surface of the water is calm. Mankind has been turned into clay, floating, according to Clay's picturesque, but precarious, translation, "like a log." On the twelfth day an island emerges, and the ship grounds upon Mount Nisir, which holds it fast. On the seventh day after the grounding Ut-napishtim sends forth first a dove, and then a swallow, each of which finds no resting-place, and so returns. Then a raven is sent forth, and wades, croaking, in the mud left by the receding water. Ut-napishtim offers a libation upon the mountain peak, setting out the sacrificial vessels in sevens. The gods, smelling the sweet savour, "Gathered like flies round the sacrificer." (The suggestion, it would seem, is that through the destruction of mankind the customary sacrifices had ceased, and the gods were ravenous.) Ishtar says that Ellil, who "took not counsel, and sent the deluge," shall not come to the offering. When Ellil approaches and sees the ship he is enraged, suspecting that some of the gods have treacherously connived at the escape of a man. Ninib insinuates that probably Ea knows something about the matter. Ea speaks, and says that an indiscriminating deluge was hardly fair. By all means let men that are sinful be punished—but wild beasts, or famine, or

pestilence, might have effected that. "I have not divulged the decision of the great gods. I made Atrahasis see a dream, and so he heard the decision of the gods. Now take counsel concerning him." Ea goes into the ship, brings out Ut-napishtim and his wife, makes them kneel face to face, stands between them, and blesses them: "Formerly, Ut-napishtim was a man, but now let Ut-napishtim and his wife be like the gods, even us; let Ut-napishtim dwell afar off at the mouth of the rivers."

It may be useful, before taking into account the other deluge stories, to discuss in detail one or two points of interest in (F). The meaning of the name Ut-napishtim, which is also read Uta-napishtim, has been the subject of much controversy. The second element in it, *napishtim*, is obviously closely related to the Hebrew word *nephesh*, which means "living being," "self," or "life." Dhorme renders the name as "He has seen (or found) life." Clay contends<sup>1</sup> that the name, the full form of which he gives as Um-napishtim-ruqim=he who lengthened the days of life, is an epithet, not really a name. The actual name of the hero even in (F) he believes to be Atrahasis, which Ea uses in his explanation towards the end of the story, because the epithet had not been earned until the gift of immortality had been conferred on the hero. In his later book<sup>2</sup> he revises the name to Um-napishtim-ruqu=the day of life is extended. The combination *Ut* (or *Um*)

<sup>1</sup> Clay, *Deluge*, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Clay, *Origin*, p. 167.

*napishtim ruqu* does occur at the beginning of the eleventh tablet, but *ruqu* there is generally taken to be an attribute adjective to Ut-napishtim, and the combination is rendered "Ut-napishtim, the distant one." Clay's proposal is attractive.

The "reed-hut" has been a great puzzle. Both the word and the general sense are difficult. Dhorme translates it "reed-hedge." Clay leaves it untranslated, and suggests that it is an Amorite word which has been glossed in the Epic by "wall." There is a curious parallel to the passage in Langdon's rendering of the *Sumerian Epic*, Obverse II, l.25—"his revelation in the reed-house as a decision he rendered unto thee," where the word translated "reed-house" is similar to the word of our passage, the antecedents of the pronouns being Enki and Nintud. By the parallelism there "reed-hut" may be equated to "temple" in the preceding line. Since later in the *Gilgamesh Epic* Ea says that he made the disclosure in a dream, it would appear that he spoke the secret in the "reed-hut," and that Ut-napishtim, sleeping in the precincts, received it from the wall in a vision. Jensen compared the well-known story of Midas's servant, who whispered the secret of the king's deformity to a hole in the ground, with the consequence that the reeds springing up there revealed the secret by their rustling.

The location of the mountain Nisir is as yet undetermined: indeed the name itself is not absolutely certain. F. H. Woods thinks<sup>1</sup> the site

<sup>1</sup> Cf. ERE IV, p. 554.

is to be found in Rowandiz, in the North-East of Babylonia.

Atra-hasis, which, as we have seen, Clay believes to be the real name of the hero, with Ut-napishtim as an epithet to it, is generally rendered "the very wise," and regarded as an epithet to the name Ut-napishtim. It is certainly an epithet in the Adapa legend, where Adapa is called "the Atra-hasis" of the Anunnaki. On the other hand Clay has pointed out that in the legend of Ea and Atrahasis we have "the wise lord, Atrahasis," which would be mere tautology if we take Atrahasis as an epithet=very wise. Further in the early version of the deluge story the determinative for "man" is used before the name. Clay translates the name "(the god) Atar is mindful." It has already been mentioned that the Xisouthros of Berossus is commonly recognized as Atra-hasis with the two elements of the name reversed.

It has long been recognized that the Biblical record of the Flood consists of two traditions which have been dovetailed to make a consecutive history. For proof of this any modern commentary may be consulted. The more primitive of the two traditions embraces, according to Gunkel, Gen. 6<sup>5-8</sup>, 7<sup>1,2,3b,4,5,10,7,16b,12,17b,23a,22,23b</sup>, 8<sup>6a,2b,3a,6b,7-12,13b,20-22</sup>, and is assigned to J. For convenience let us call this (J). The second tradition contains 6<sup>9-22</sup>, 7<sup>6,11,13-16a,17a,18-21,24</sup>, 8<sup>1,2a,3b,4,5,13a,14-19</sup>, 9<sup>1-17,28,29</sup>. This is evidently part of P, and we will call it (P). The relation between (J) and (P) is illustrated very well by the varying Babylonian traditions.

For purposes of general comparison let us take some of the leading features of the (J) and (P) traditions

- (a) God's anger at the iniquity of mankind, and intention to destroy it.
- (b) The piety of Noah, and his favour in the eyes of God.
- (c) The instruction to take family, beasts, and birds, into the ark.

In (J) the ritually clean beasts and birds by sevens, the others by twos.  
 In (P) all by twos, and food in addition.

- (d) The Flood is caused by rain, and in (P) also by an uprush of the subterranean water.
- (e) The perishing of all flesh.
- (f) The promise that no similar flood shall again occur.

Peculiar to (J) are

- (g) The sending forth of the birds.
- (h) The offering of the sacrifice, which God smells.

Peculiar to (P) are

- (i) The warning of Noah and the elaborate instructions as to the making of the ark, and in particular the mention of bitumen. Something corresponding to this is implied, but not preserved, in (J).
- (j) The resting of the ark on a mountain in Ararat.
- (k) The rainbow sign.

The time notes in the two traditions show considerable variations. In (J) the flood culminates

in forty days, but in (P) it reaches its climax in 150 days. In (J) the animals take seven days to enter the ark, but in (P) this seems to occupy but a single day.

If now we examine the Babylonian sources given at the beginning of the chapter we find in all of them, but most abundantly in (F), parallels to these salient features. Thus we have in

- (A) a fragmentary parallel to (c).
- (B) Parallels to (c) and (i). If we accept Jastrow's reading there is the interesting addition of "craftsmen."
- (C) Parallels to (c), with "craftsmen" added, and also the peculiar detail of (P) as to the food; and to (i).
- (D) Parallels to (a), (b), (h) and (i). The deluge here lasts *seven* days and nights.
- (E) Parallels to (c), (g), though the birds are unspecified and are sent forth more than one at a time, (h), (i), and particularly the mention of "pitch."

In (F) the parallelism is very full. There are parallels to (a), to (c), with no mention of birds, but treasure and craftsmen added. The presence of birds is implied however by the later incident of their being sent forth. We have a parallel to (d) in that rain is the cause of the flood. We have parallels also to (e) and (g), but the birds are sent out in the order dove, swallow, raven, instead of raven, dove, dove, dove as in Genesis. It is highly probable that

the raven does not belong to the original form of the tradition in Genesis. Apart from the fact that the introduction of the raven spoils the symmetry of the narrative, it will be observed that the purpose for which the birds are sent forth—"to see if the waters were abated"—is not mentioned until after the sending forth of the dove. The feature (*h*) appears, with the detail that the gods smell the savour almost verbally coincident. Similarly (*i*) is found with the very same word for "pitch" or "bitumen" that the Biblical account uses. We find also (*j*), with the difference that the name of the mountain on which the vessel grounds is given as Nisir. On the other hand the flood of (F) culminates at the end of the sixth day, which is a considerably shorter time than is given in either of the Biblical accounts.

These striking parallels between the Babylonian and the Biblical traditions must not blind us, however, to the even more salient divergences. The most important of these consists in the extremely different views of deity. The cuneiform accounts are frankly polytheistic, and, even so, give no very elevated picture of the gods. The latter are terrified, crouching like dogs in dismay at the consequences of their own handiwork. They gather like flies about the sacrifice. They suffer from divided counsel, and

intrigue one against another. Ishtar, with truly feminine inconstancy, apparently first agrees to the sending of the deluge, then repents of her decision when she sees the appalling consequences, and finally blames Ellil, speaking as though she had all along advised against the flood. Indeed her inconsistency is so marked that some critics think it must be due to composition of different versions of the story. Even Ea, who appears in his usual role as the friend of man, protesting that punishment should fall only upon the guilty, acts very disingenuously, and advises Ut-napishtim to tell lies in explanation of the boat-building. This criticism applies even more to the advice given by Kronos in the Berossus account. What a wide gulf between all this and the majestic and ethical conception of God in Genesis !

Whether it is fair to say that the Deluge of the cuneiform records has no ethical motive, but is due to sheer caprice on the part of the deities, is doubtful. In at least one version the piety of the hero is emphasized. Ea's protest that only the guilty should be punished does him credit, and might almost be taken to mean that the flood was intended as a punishment for sinful man. Still it is true that the sense of sin is much more definitely expressed in Genesis.

On a less important side the Genesis account is inferior at any rate to the Gilgamesh version. Especially the (P) story compares ill as literature with the elaborate poetry of the story of Ut-napishtim. This is due to the higher civilization

of Babylonia. A more advanced state of culture is reflected also in the taking aboard of the craftsmen, to ensure that the knowledge of no handicraft might be lost to mankind through the deluge. In the Berossus account we have evidence of a concern for literature in the precaution taken to ensure that the literary records should not be lost. In this connection it is interesting to compare what Josephus says of the sons of Seth :

"And, that their inventions might not be lost before they became generally known, upon Adam's prediction that the world would be destroyed at one time by the force of fire, and at another time by the violence and quantity of water, they made two pillars, one of brick, the other of stone, and inscribed their discoveries on them both, that in case the pillar of brick should be destroyed by the flood, the pillar of stone might remain, and teach mankind those discoveries, and also inform them that there was another pillar of brick erected by them. And it remains in the land of Siris to this day."<sup>1</sup>

However, our recognition of these differences, and of the fact that the differences lie in what for religion are the supremely important things, still leaves unaffected the existence of the numerous parallels in form and detail. Of the souls inhabiting the two bodies the one is incomparably more spiritual than the other : the bodies themselves have so striking a likeness in many features that we cannot but believe there is a kinship between

<sup>1</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, I, ii. 3.

them. Our next problem, therefore, is to discuss the degree of that relationship: is it near and immediate, or is the family likeness inherited from remote common ancestors?

When the cuneiform story was first brought to light some leaped to the conclusion that it must be derived from the Old Testament narrative, and would furnish a brilliant justification for the traditional view of the Biblical narrative. It is said, indeed, that Roman Catholic scholars were sent post haste to make copies of the cuneiform record before infidels should deface or destroy a piece of evidence so fatal to opponents of tradition. However, the idea that the solution of the problem as to the relationship might be found in direct descent of the Babylonian version from that of the Old Testament may be dismissed without discussion. It is antecedently improbable, and considerations of chronology make it absolutely impossible. The Babylonian tradition is many centuries—even some of the written forms in which we possess it are several—older than the time of Moses.

If then we rule out the solution that for the deluge stories Babylon is dependent upon the Hebrews, is the reverse true? Do the Old Testament stories go back to Babylonian origins? This is the generally accepted view of Assyriologists and Old Testament scholars. Delitzsch speaks<sup>1</sup> with characteristic assurance—"the whole story (i.e., the Gilgamesh version), precisely as it was

<sup>1</sup> Delitzsch, BB, p. 45.

written down, travelled to Canaan.” The verdict of King<sup>1</sup> is that “the general dependence of the Biblical versions upon the Babylonian legend as a whole has long been recognized, and needs no further demonstration.” Skinner is almost as positive : “the dependence of the Biblical narrative on this ancient Babylonian legend hardly requires detailed proof.”<sup>2</sup> So cautious a scholar as Driver says : “The Hebrew and the Babylonian narratives have evidently a common origin. And the Hebrew narrative must be *derived from* the Babylonian.”<sup>3</sup> Woods holds that the J Bible story is derived from “one that did not differ essentially from the Akkadian as we know it,” and that P “may have had access to some other version of the Akkadian story.”<sup>4</sup> It will be observed that here there is a rather important modification as compared with Driver’s statement.

The earlier idea that the dependence is purely literary is not now often encountered. Even Jeremias said,<sup>5</sup> “One must be careful of the acceptance of the idea of a borrowed literature. The material has travelled. Inspection of the Babylonian cuneiform tablets would therefore not be needed by a Biblical chronicler ; besides which he would have rejected a literary dependence upon religious grounds.” A main argument for the priority of the Babylonian record is found in the often-repeated theory that Babylonia is, in contrast

<sup>1</sup> King, *Legends*, p. 92.

<sup>2</sup> Skinner, *Genesis*, p. 177.

<sup>3</sup> Driver, *Genesis*, pp. 106f.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. ERE, IV, pp. 552f.

<sup>5</sup> Jeremias, OTLA, I, p. 273

with Palestine, a much more likely place for the origin of a deluge story. So Driver, quoting Zimmern, says,<sup>1</sup> "the very essence of the Biblical narrative presupposes a country liable, like Babylonia, to inundations; so that it cannot be doubted that the story was 'indigenous in Babylonia and transplanted to Palestine.'" Gunkel, too, asserts<sup>2</sup> that the local colour of the story points to lower Babylonia as the place of origin: "such inundations happen not in Canaan, but in the alluvial plains on the lower reaches of the Tigris and Euphrates; and in ancient times, when the land was as yet unprotected by a system of canals and dykes, such floods will have been all the more devastating." So the theory is very plausibly held that in its early Sumerian form the deluge story is founded on a recollection of some such great inundation of the South Babylonian plain, which stood out in memory as unusually devastating in its effects. Jastrow carries the argument a stage further. He points out<sup>3</sup> that in all the Babylonian traditions which name the god who gives warning of the deluge to the hero the god is Ea. Therefore the story must have come originally from Ea's great cult-centre, Eridu, which was close to the Persian Gulf. That this role should be played by Ea, however, does not necessarily lead to the conclusion deduced, in view of the fact, already more than once mentioned, that the part of benefactor to mankind is constantly allotted

<sup>1</sup> Driver, *Genesis*, p. 107.

<sup>2</sup> Gunkel, *Genesis*, p. 71.

<sup>3</sup> Jastrow, HBT, p. 321.

to Ea in other documents. Indeed Jastrow unintentionally blunts the edge of his own argument when in the same context he remarks that “the god of humanity *par excellence* throughout all periods of the Babylonian-Assyrian religion” is Ea.

Further, the elaborate description of the ship seems much more plausibly to have originated in Babylonia than in a country like Palestine, and certainly than among a people so little accustomed to the sea and its ways as the Hebrews. It is by no means easy to construct from any of the traditions an exact idea of what the ship was like. The description of it in the J story has been omitted in favour of the elaborate account of P, who makes it roughly 450 feet long, 75 broad, and 45 high. According to Berossus it measured more than a thousand yards in length by 400 yards in breadth. The Gilgamesh Epic makes the vessel symmetrical, approximately 200 feet in length, breadth, and height. It had six decks and was divided into seven divisions; and its interior was “divided nine times.” King made<sup>1</sup> the most interesting suggestion that the kuffah, a kind of pitched coracle in constant use on the Tigris and Euphrates to this day, has approximately the same proportions as Ut-napishtim’s ship, and “would provide an admirable model for the gigantic vessel.” This type may well be of prehistoric origin; it is formed of wicker-work coated with bitumen, and is represented on carvings from

<sup>1</sup> King, *Legends*, pp. 81f.

Nineveh as transporting heavy building material. The storage capacity of such craft is immense, for "their circular form and steeply curved side allow every inch of space to be utilized. It is almost impossible to upset them, and their only disadvantage is lack of speed. For their guidance all that is required is a steersman with a paddle." A circular form would render it much more easy to explain the curious odd number of nine lateral divisions. Another good point made by King is that "the use of pitch and bitumen for smearing the vessel inside and out, though unusual even in Mesopotamian shipbuilding, is precisely the method employed in the kuffah's construction." The suggestion seems to be exceedingly plausible. In Genesis the ark is constructed of gopher wood, smeared with bitumen within and without, and the word used for it (*tebah*) is apparently a loan-word from Egypt, used elsewhere only of the "ark" in which Moses floated on the Nile, which, be it noted, was of papyrus smeared with slime and bitumen. A magnified vessel constructed on this design would admirably suit the Biblical picture of the ark drifting and tossing, but in security, until the deluge abated. We may, at any rate, feel confident that the ship, equally with its name, is not a native conception among the Hebrews.

Another point often urged in favour of Babylonia as the original home of the Biblical story is the detail given in P that the ark grounded in the far North-East, on a mountain in Ararat. To

these arguments Gunkel has added another,<sup>1</sup> namely that certain features of the Genesis story are properly understood only in the light reflected from the cuneiform record. The instances he gives, however, are so subtle that they can add but little weight to that of the arguments already adduced.

If we admit, at all events for the time being, the conclusion that the arguments point strongly to Babylonia as the original source of the Genesis deluge story, in what way shall we answer the question "how and when did it pass into Israel's possession?" It has many times been pointed out that, strangely enough, we find no references to the Deluge in the pre-exilic prophets. To other elements of Genesis, such as the story of Sodom, much less important, they make repeated references. The earliest prophetic passages mentioning the deluge story are Ezek. 14<sup>14, 20</sup> and Isa. 54<sup>9</sup>. Accordingly critics like Haupt and Usener have argued that the story in Genesis was unknown in Israel before the Exile, and was directly borrowed during the Exile from the Babylonian documents. Others are less dogmatic, and think it may have been known earlier, but trace it to different points of historic contact between Babylonia and Palestine. The reign of Ahaz, the reign of Manasseh, or the time of Merodach-baladan's embassy to Hezekiah, have all been advanced as suitable periods for the transmission of the story. Marti gives the time more vaguely as that of the older prophets.

<sup>1</sup> Gunkel, *Genesis*, p. 71.

Against all this type of theorizing Gunkel very forcibly objects<sup>1</sup> that it is unreliable because it persists in regarding the problem too much as a purely literary one. Such stories might be written down, but were told from mouth to mouth much more often than they were read. They pass over national boundaries not so much at times of political crisis as in "culture epochs." They travel more frequently with the trader than with the ambassador. Moreover, an author displaying the religious spirit of Genesis would never have reconciled himself to borrowing and adapting polytheistic stories from a hated foreign land. Nor must too much weight be laid on the argument from silence.

Just as the Gilgamesh Epic itself is a composite work, so also there is evidence that the deluge episode within it has behind it a long history of literary transmission. The episode has been analyzed into an Ut-napishtim and an Atra-hasis story on the basis of the use of the two names. Evidence of composition has been found also in the fact that the disaster is attributed to different gods, and in the different attitudes which Ishtar is represented as adopting. While none of these arguments seems in itself very cogent, it is undoubtedly the case that a close reading of the story confirms the impression that it has been produced in a way very like that which in the Old Testament has made a connected narrative from different traditions. It is probable that behind the story of Genesis there lie not only varying oral traditions,

<sup>1</sup> Gunkel, *Genesis*, p. 72.

as Gunkel so strongly insists, but also written documents composed within the Hebrew nation. Some of the archaic touches that are preserved may with great probability be traced back to such sources. A striking anthropomorphism such as that in Gen. 7<sup>16</sup>, where Yahweh is said to have shut the door of the ark, will be more easy to account for if we assume that it was fixed in quite definite written form in the Hebrew sources. But the conclusion that both P and J employ variant Hebrew traditions both oral and written will not exclude the possibility that there may still be complete dependence upon Babylonia. It may be accounted for on the theory that variant Babylonian traditions came at different times to the knowledge of the Hebrews. It is *a priori* possible for such traditions to have come, as Gunkel supposes may be the case, during the time of the later judges and earlier kings. Still more likely is the most generally accepted explanation that different traditions may have come from Babylonia to the Canaanites, through whose agency they have been passed on to the Hebrews. Nor, if we accept the story of Abraham's Aramean origin as being soundly based, can we exclude the possibility that part of the Hebrew stock brought such traditions with them from Ur and Harran.

Powerful as the case just stated may seem, it must be recognized that some parts of the argument will hardly bear all the weight of proof that is laid upon them. In particular the criticisms which Clay has made of the theory, lately almost taken for

granted, that the descriptions of the deluge exactly fit the situation of the alluvial plain of Babylonia, deserve careful consideration. To say the least he seems to have demonstrated that the argument should be put with less dogmatic emphasis. His discussion<sup>1</sup> of the question as to what is really the cause of the deluge according to the various traditions is worthy of study. His first point is that in all the cuneiform traditions which preserve the description of the cause of the deluge it is undoubtedly heavy rain-storms. In the Gilgamesh Epic the deluge is caused primarily by heavy rain—"the *muir kukki*<sup>2</sup> at eventide sent a heavy rain," 1.91. The account of what happens during the following six days seems quite clearly to be that of a thunder, lightning, rain, and wind-storm. Clay adduces also the passage from column 2 of (A) which speaks of rain in torrents "coming upon the fields like a thief." As, however, this passage cannot be definitely shown to belong to that part of (A) which is a deluge story, and is indeed separated from it by a very extensive lacuna of several columns, it had better be left out of consideration. In (D) the cause of the deluge is wind-storms and storm-flood (*amaru*). The Berossus tradition, too, makes the cause of the disaster to be a deluge (*κατακλυσμός*). So in (J) the sole cause of the deluge is rain, and in (P) rain

<sup>1</sup> Clay, *Origin*, p. vii.

<sup>2</sup> The exact meaning of these words is still obscure. They are often rendered by "powers of darkness," or something equivalent.

pours from the windows of heaven while the subterranean waters surge forth.

Clay gives elaborate statistics to prove that the average rainfall in Babylonia is by no means heavy, quoting Willcocks, Koldevey, and Banks, to that effect. The heaviest recorded in recent years is only just over ten inches, and Banks writes : “The rains are not continuous as in other parts of the Orient, for they come with no greater frequency than during the New England summer.” Inundations were, of course, common experiences on the alluvial plain of Babylonia ; but they were brought about by the melting of the snows in the mountains of Armenia and Kurdistan, not by rain-storms. So there is very considerable force in Clay’s conclusion that “while \* \* \* Babylonia because of inundations was excellent soil for deluge stories, certainly the force which caused the deluge could not have been rain.”<sup>1</sup>

This difficulty in the way of accepting the common assertion that the deluge story must have originated in Babylonia had not been altogether unobserved by earlier writers. King, in discussing<sup>2</sup> the Sumerian term *amaru* in (D), sought to avoid the rendering “rain-storm” or “storm-flood” : he adduced the fact that in a syllabary the word is given as equivalent to the Babylonian *abubu*-flood, adding “the word *abubu* is often conventionally rendered ‘deluge,’ but should be more accurately rendered ‘flood.’” But while it is true that *abubu* may be used of an ordinary inundation

<sup>1</sup> Clay, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

<sup>2</sup> King, *Legends*, p. 70\*.

flood, this does not affect the point that in the stories we have been considering rain is definitely stated to have been the cause of the flood. Again, in the Gilgamesh Epic the climax of the flood, when the waters were at their extreme height, is described as the time when the *abubu* had ceased. It is quite clear that in this passage *abubu* cannot be the flood itself, but must mean the cyclone of rain and wind which caused it.

Another equally unavailing attempt to minimize the difficulty was made by Süss, who said that the real cause of the flood in the Gilgamesh Epic was a typhoon blowing in the water from the Persian Gulf.<sup>1</sup> This hypothesis has received the support of many critics, including among others Sayce, Delitzsch, Gunkel, and Woods. Delitzsch says<sup>2</sup> that when the story had travelled to Israel "it was forgotten that the sea was the chief factor," and so the Biblical accounts ignore this. But there appears to be absolutely no basis for this hypothesis of an inundation from the sea. It is true that the waste of waters upon which the boat floats is called *tamtu*=sea; but this is only as we might describe any large inland flood as a "sea of waters." Had this theory been correct surely there would have been no need to lay so much emphasis in the beginning of the story upon the downfall of rain; any rain-caused flood would have been negligible in comparison with an inundation from the Persian Gulf.

Whether Clay's own hypothesis, that the original

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Frazer, FLOT, I, pp. 358f.

<sup>2</sup> Delitzsch, BB, p. 45.

flood story comes from Amurru, is any more successful is another matter. His arguments to prove that the Sumerian story (D) is actually a translation of an Amorite original are interesting, some of them extremely plausible, but others precarious. Nor is it easy to imagine a great inundation in the mountain ranges of Lebanon, despite the average rainfall of fifty inches a year. Clay himself seems rather to shy at this idea, for the furthest he ventures to go is that "under exceptional conditions a great inundation could have occurred in certain parts of Amurru with rain as the cause." He is rather inclined to accept Fessenden's theory that the seat of the deluge was in the great Central Asian basin, north of "the mountains of Ararat," between the Black and the Caspian Seas. When we remember that a deluge story is found in the legends of very many peoples, and the extraordinary variety of detail which characterizes the different traditions, we shall be cautious about dogmatism on this question. Some of these national stories appear to be based upon local inundations, while others are intended to explain how certain local natural phenomena have been brought about. It is extraordinary that, so far as our present information goes, Egypt should not have possessed a deluge tradition.

Any discussion as to the causes or the locality of the deluge will, of course, be rendered superfluous if the hypothesis which treats the whole story as a nature or cosmic myth is to be accepted. The

astrological school of interpretation sees in the legend a reflection of the passage of the sun through part of the ecliptic. The assumption, however, that at a very early period the astronomy of Babylonia had recognized that during the course of the ages the spring equinox must pass through the southern or watery region of the Zodiac is very dubious. A simpler, but similar, theory makes the passage of the hero in his ship a mythological representation of the journey of the sun, or the moon, through the heavens. The former view is taken by Cheyne and Usener, the latter of whom thinks the chief motive is the landing of the deluge hero, which he supposes to represent the rising of the sun. According to this hypothesis the myth will have been transferred from the heavens to the earth. The moon theory has been worked out in great detail by Böklen. Stucken and Winckler naturally see in the deluge stories only "celestial occurrences."

Others hold a combination of the nature or cosmic myth theory with a belief in a certain historical basis for the deluge story. Thus Jastrow, while he asserts that the "Deluge myth rests on the annual decay and death of nature," thinks the particular form in which the myth expresses itself was "suggested, perhaps, by the recollection of a particularly violent rainy and stormy season, accompanied by destruction of cities and loss of life."<sup>1</sup> This is very much the line taken by Jeremias, who, while finding very many astral and

<sup>1</sup> Jastrow, HBT, p. 322.

cosmic motifs both in the Babylonian and in the Biblical forms of the story, says<sup>1</sup> that the former “borrows its imagery from natural events which may be observed from time to time in the stormy floods in the plains of the Euphrates.”

It is possible to admit that certain elements of astral myth may be found in the story without conceding that the story itself is astral. These elements may well have been added to it at a comparatively late stage. The distinction between the pre-diluvian and the post-diluvian kings seems to point in the direction of a real historical event. And if the story originated as an astral myth what can be the point of the promise that never again shall a deluge come upon the earth? Woods's summary of the position is excellent: “we have not to deal with mythological or cosmological systems in which a Deluge played a part \* \* these stories were the result of experience, tradition, imagination, and natural curiosity, acting sometimes separately, but more often in combination in different ways and different degrees.” We should add the qualification that afterwards some astral and mythological motifs have in certain cases been woven into the stories, as, for example, the “translation” of Ut-napishtim.

We conclude, then, that even the very striking coincidences between the Biblical and the Babylonian records of the deluge fall short of demonstrating that the former borrowed from the latter. In view of the widespread occurrences of varying

<sup>1</sup> *Jeremias, OTLA*, I, p. 271.

forms of the deluge story<sup>1</sup> it is not safe to say that Israel is even indirectly dependent upon Babylon here; for until it is proved that the Babylonian stories originated in Babylonia, which Clay's argument seems to render less certain, it is conceivable that even the striking elements of coincidence go back to some common source. If however, we allow that the Biblical story owes some of its material features to Babylonian sources the spirit which informs the narrative is Israel's own. Israel may have inherited, if not from Babylonia, certainly from some other source, a house: but the house has been transformed almost into a temple. To quote the fine words of Jeremias:

"The Biblical story of the Deluge possesses an intrinsic power, even to the present day, of awakening the world's conscience, and the Biblical chronicler wrote it with this educational and moral end in view. Of this end there is no trace in the extra-Biblical records of the Deluge."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Haupt in JSOR, I, p. 3, for example, quotes a flood legend of the Tarascan Indians, West of Mexico City. The "Noah" of this story sent out first a vulture and then a humming bird. Frazer, FLOT, I, pp. 104-361, collects an immense number of flood stories.

<sup>2</sup> Jeremias, OTLA, I, p. 274.

## CHAPTER X.

### Sabbath and Yahweh.

PERHAPS in no detail has the direct dependence of Israel upon Babylonia been more dogmatically affirmed than in connection with the Sabbath. It may be well before attempting any estimate of the value this dogma possesses to examine briefly what is said in the Old Testament about the Sabbath. When we come to grips with the problem the impression made upon us is that exactly what the Sabbath was, where it originated, and how it developed into the institution with which we are familiar in later Judaism, are all of them questions, and especially the first two, to which no demonstrably certain answers have been given, though many theories have been propounded.

Leaving aside for the present the references to the Sabbath which are contained in the legislation, and looking at the earlier allusions, we are met with the striking fact that there is no evidence of Sabbath observance in the patriarchal period, and indeed no extensive material that can be reckoned as pre-exilic.<sup>1</sup> There are four passages which seem to point to the conclusion that the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Harding, *Feasts and Fasts*, HDB, I, p. 859.

Sabbath was closely connected with the new-moon festival.

"Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day? it is neither new moon nor sabbath."—2 Kings 4<sup>23</sup>.

" \* new moon and sabbath \* \* ."—Isa. I<sup>13</sup>.

"I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feasts, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn assemblies."—Hosea 2<sup>11</sup>.

"When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat?"—Amos 8.<sup>5</sup>

The passage from Hosea would lead to the inference that the Sabbath was a season of festal joy. From the Amos passage we may deduce that there was at any rate some cessation from the business of ordinary life on that day. By inference the passage from Kings also supports this latter view. The question of the Shunammite's husband suggests that the ass for which she had asked in order to make her journey to the prophet would have been available, even though it was harvest time, had the day been new moon or Sabbath; the inference surely is that on those days work would cease, so that the beasts would not be required for labour on the farm.

Meinholt, in a very illuminating study<sup>1</sup> of the subject, came to some rather startling conclusions. The combination of new moon with Sabbath led him to suppose that the Sabbath must have been originally the day of the full moon. This, he says,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Meinholt, *Sabbat und Woche im Alten Testament*, 1905.

would have been regarded as self-evident, but for the fact that the real situation has been obscured by the legal parts of the Old Testament. A seven day week running through the whole of the year cannot be demonstrated before Ezekiel : it is evident that up to that period Israel had no such regular seven day week. Both the new moon and the full moon, or Sabbath, days were festal occasions. He uses the story of David and Jonathan in 1 Sam. 20 to show that the new moon is a time when, alike at the palace and in the ordinary family, the household assembled for a feast. It is true the text calls the family feast a yearly one, but Meinholt rejects this. He thinks that the Sabbath became a day of rest because it was a feast day, and not through a special divine command.

Meinholt, who regards the Decalogue as exilic or post-exilic, urges that the Deuteronomic law-giving<sup>1</sup> makes no special reference to the Sabbath. Baentsch explains this as accidental,<sup>2</sup> while he treats the ignoring of the new moon as deliberate. Meinholt argues that if both the new moon and the Sabbath are really moon feasts it is easy to understand that prophetic priestly circles would detest both because of their associations. Had there been a regular seven day Sabbath going back to Moses the Deuteronomists could scarcely have ignored it so completely. Their consideration for the poor

<sup>1</sup> i.e., Deut. chapters 12-26.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Baentsch, *Exodus, Leviticus, Numeri*, p. liii, Note<sup>2</sup>.

would have compelled them to mention the seventh day of rest had it really existed.

How then does Meinhold account for the conversion of the full moon feast into the regular seventh day Sabbath of abstinence from work? From the passage

"Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee : from the time thou beginnest to put the sickle to the standing corn shalt thou begin to number seven weeks."—Deut. 16<sup>9</sup>.

he deduces that in Southern Israel there was a seven day week, not indeed throughout the year, but during the harvest period. Such weeks must have a separating day, which in Judah was a rest day. This would be the origin of the seventh day celebration. The Northern kingdom knew neither the seven weeks nor the rest days with which they terminated. In 2 Kings 4 new moon and full moon—for so he understands "Sabbath" there—are the only recognized rest days. A weekly rest day in addition to these would have been impracticable. When the Deuteronomic law-givers struck out the new moon and Sabbath, that left no rest day, and the place was supplied by a weekly rest day. Ezekiel, after the break of old associations caused by the Exile, was able to effect transformations of custom. He made the new Sabbath run, like the old full moon feast, throughout the year, but, like the rest day of Judah, at regular weekly intervals. As a distinctive mark in a foreign land this Sabbath was strongly emphasized.

This very brief summary of Meinhold's position

will suffice to show that it is ingenious, and that it throws light upon some important points connected with the subject. It appears to have convinced Marti.<sup>1</sup> But while we recognize its suggestiveness we cannot feel that the arguments are really cogent. One weakness of the position is that it involves some excisions from the text—for which, it is true, Meinhold finds independent support in most cases. The dogmatic statement upon the late introduction of the seven day week ought not to be accepted hastily. Nor is any completely satisfying explanation offered of the way in which the full moon was transformed into the Sabbath. The argument that to add a weekly rest day to new moon and full moon would be impracticable is hardly likely to convince any one who has lived in a country where saints' days are holidays. But perhaps the most serious criticism of the argument is that it takes an unduly low view of the evidence derived from the legislation. Meinhold's view that the Decalogue is "exilic or post-exilic" we cannot easily accept.<sup>2</sup> In the creation narrative of P, which is so decidedly antagonistic to anthropomorphism, the anthropomorphic trait which regards God as taking a seventh day rest must surely have been embodied from a much older source.

Kittel attacks<sup>3</sup> the fundamental hypothesis upon which the theory rests. He says, "As a matter of fact the existence of a full moon festival is

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Marti, *Die Religion des Alten Testaments*, p. 5. English translation, *The Religion of Israel*, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. p. 117.

<sup>3</sup> Kittel, GVI, I, p. 655.

nowhere demonstrable in ancient Israel. This should be established before use is made of it. It is important to notice that, while the new moon festival has maintained itself in later Judaism and even up to the present time, there is no survival of a full moon festival. If such a festival were known in ancient Canaan it must have vanished very early." This last criticism, however, might be easily met by Meinhold, who would say that the reason for the disappearance of the full moon festival was just the fact for which he is contending, namely, that it was superseded by the Sabbath.

Let us come now to an examination of the popular theory that the Jewish Sabbath—both name and institution—was derived from Babylonian sources. This assertion was made very emphatically more than twenty years ago by Delitzsch in his *Babel-Bibel* lectures.

"But since the Babylonians also had a Sabbath day (*shabattu*), on which, for the purpose of conciliating the gods, there was a festival—that is to say, no work was to be done—and since the 7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th days of a month are marked on a calendar of sacrifices and festivals dug up in Babylonia as days on which 'the shepherd of the great nations' shall eat no roast flesh, shall not change his dress, shall not offer sacrifice, as days on which the king shall not mount the chariot, or pronounce judgment, the Magus shall not prophesy, even the physician shall not lay his hand upon the sick, in short, as days which are not suitable for any affair (business?),

it is scarcely possible for us to doubt that we owe the blessings decreed in the Sabbath or Sunday day of rest in the last resort to that ancient and civilized race on the Euphrates and Tigris."<sup>1</sup>

From this very positive statement the various opinions may be graded until we reach an equally strong affirmation that there is no connection between the Israelite Sabbath and Babylonia. Thus Pinches says, that though the Sabbath as we know it is a specifically Hebrew institution, it probably had its origin in Babylonia. Similarly Gunkel concludes that "probably the Hebrew Sabbath is derived from Babylonia, the classic land of reverence for the stars and their characteristic days." Abrahams thinks "It is still far from clear whether or not the Hebrew Sabbath was a derivative from Babylonia." Condamin decides that no connection is established, and, at the very extreme, Clay holds that the idea of derivation from Babylonia is so completely exploded that the scholars who have put it forward should openly retract. What then is the evidence from which such widely divergent conclusions have been drawn? First there is the tablet from which Delitzsch quotes. This comes from the Ashurbanipal collection, but evidently refers to the king of Babylon, because of the deities named in it. It should be noted that not only the 7th, 14th, 21st and 28th days are named in it as "evil days" upon which the restrictions apply, but also the 19th day of the month. This is rather a difficulty

<sup>1</sup> Delitzsch, BB, pp. 40f.

in the way of finding here a regular seventh day Sabbath, but the explanation offered is that the 19th day is the 49th from the beginning of the preceding month, that is, the end of the seventh week from that starting point. But if this explanation be accepted certainly the day of restriction occurs oftener than at the end of each week. Nor must it be forgotten that the inscription refers only to a particular month, the intercalary<sup>1</sup> Second Elul, and that it is by no means certain that these days occurred in every month of the year. Further the prohibitions attached to these "evil days" apply only to particular persons, the king and the physician. In order to discover whether there were signs of a general restriction of business on particular days Johns made an elaborate analysis of a great many business contracts, classifying them according to the day of the month on which they were dated. The result showed that on all these days business was carried on, though there was a considerable falling off on the 19th day of the month. During the First Dynasty of Babylon, and in the seventh century B.C., all these days showed a decrease of trade. But, on the other hand, during the Kassite period trade went on much as usual on all the days, even the 19th. Certainly these days seem to have been hardly like the early Hebrew Sabbath, which was a time of joy rather than restriction. On the latter the Shunammite woman might well have

<sup>1</sup> The Babylonians reckoned by means of the lunar year of 354 days: at intervals of some years an extra month was added to bring the year into harmony with the solar year. This bore the same name, Elul, as one of the twelve ordinary months.

expected to go on a journey, but the former were just the days when the king might not ride in his chariot.

Perhaps more important is the fact that Babylonia knows a day called *shabattum*, or *shapattum*. This however seems not to have been the name for the days of restriction dealt with in the tablet. In a syllabary, that is, a document explaining difficult words, was found the equation *um nuh libbi=shapattum*. The meaning of the words on the left side of the equation is literally "day of the rest of the heart." So it was thought that here was a proof of the Sabbath as a rest day. But from the penitential psalms it is clear that the real meaning of the words is "day when the heart (of the god) is propitiated." A tablet discovered by Pinches showed that the *shapattum* was the 15th day of the month. The passage in the astronomical poem of *enuma elish* which deals with the motions of the moon quite clearly establishes the fact that the *shapattum* is the day of the full moon. Since the verb *shabatu* is explained elsewhere as an equivalent of *gamaru*, meaning to be "complete," "full," there can be little hesitation in saying that the 15th day of the month was treated in Babylonia as the full moon day, and received the name *shapattum* because that was the day when the moon was a complete circle. This would fit in very well with Meinhold's theory that the Hebrew Sabbath was originally the day of the full moon. The etymology which derives the Hebrew word for Sabbath from the similar-sounding verb "to cease"

is a piece of folk-etymology, or perhaps it would be better to say scholastic etymology. There seems to be no satisfactory explanation of the word from any Hebrew root. The word is therefore probably very ancient. Since the day is so essentially the day of Yahweh it may very well be as old in Hebrew history as the worship of Yahweh. The various explanations given of the Sabbath in the Old Testament are also evidence of its antiquity. We read that it was a rest-day, that it was a memorial of the Exodus, and that it was a commemoration of the resting of God at the creation. In our own opinion it goes back to Mosaic times. It is commonly objected to this view that a regular rest day like the Sabbath could be celebrated only by a settled agricultural people. But the life of the desert was a much more artificial thing than we are in the habit of supposing. The wandering herdsmen have many trades. Some Bedaween breed cattle. Slaves and artisans have always been known in the desert. At the oases corn and fruit are cultivated.<sup>1</sup> Gressmann believes that neither the day nor the name are native to the Hebrews, and thinks that they derived both from Midianite sources. Not that this supposition would in his judgment rule out a connection with the Babylonian parallel. Gressmann would say that the Midianites themselves had been affected by Babylonian influence, and so there is still a link with Babylonia, though an indirect one.<sup>2</sup> The position which the Sabbath occupies in the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Kittel, GVI, I, p. 655.   <sup>2</sup> Cf. Gressmann, *Mose*, p. 463.

"ethical" decalogue<sup>1</sup> shows what great significance the Sabbath must have had : it is mentioned next to the commandments which deal with Yahweh and Yahweh's name, another argument in favour of the idea that it was especially Yahweh's day, and may well have become the national festival day when he became the national deity. The emphasis upon it is the more noteworthy in that this decalogue ignores all the other feasts and rites.

Very many peoples in a primitive state of culture observe rest days. These are not as a rule periodic, nor are they necessarily consecrated to a particular deity and employed for religious purposes. In Hutton Webster's<sup>2</sup> judgment the restrictions which characterize them are in the nature of tabus. Such days are observed at critical seasons, among which are the changes of the moon. He instances in particular the custom of Hawaii, according to which on a strict tabu day there must be no fire or light, and general gloom and silence prevails. No canoes must be launched, no one must bathe, or even be seen out of doors unless his presence is required at the temple. The old Hawaiian system included a remarkable approximation to the institution of a weekly Sabbath. In each lunar month four periods were tabu, the 3rd to the 6th nights, the time of the full moon, including the 14th and 15th nights, the 24th and 25th nights, and the 27th and 28th nights. On the other hand among

<sup>1</sup> Ex. 20<sup>8-11</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> To whose article *Sabbath, Primitive*, in ERE the information in this paragraph is due.

some peoples such days of abstinence developed into joyous festivals and holidays. "Among many peoples in the lower culture the time of the new moon and full moon, much less commonly of each half moon, is a season of restriction and abstinence"; such days may be dedicated to a god, or simply be regarded as unlucky days.

It seems probable, on the whole, that the Sabbath goes back in Israel to the earliest times, and that it was connected with the changes of the moon. Whether it was originally only the day of the full moon, or whether the half-moon days were also Sabbaths, is difficult to decide. If the former view be taken it seems reasonable to believe that the word Sabbath is connected with the Babylonian *shapattum*, which may, indeed, be true on the other supposition also.

To grant that the two peoples employed a common name for the two things by no means justifies the contention of Delitzsch that Israel owed its Sabbath to Babylonia. Such days are entirely transformed by the religion of the people among whom they are celebrated, and even where they start from a common origin develop utterly distinct characteristics. At present no evidence has been produced to show that the Babylonians had any real equivalent of the Hebrew Sabbath. Indeed, if there had been any good foundation for such a theory it is extremely difficult to understand why, after the Exile, so much importance was attached to the Sabbath as a mark of distinction between the Jews and other peoples. Another difficulty in

the way of accepting the theory lies in the fact that the Babylonians had throughout their history a five-day, not a seven-day, week.

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Among the features in Delitzsch's *Babel-Bibel* lectures which excited keen controversy among Assyriologists and other Semitic scholars was his reading of three names found in tablets dated in the First Dynasty of Babylon as Ja-a'-ve-ilu, Ja-ve-ilu, and Ja-u-um-ilu; each of these he interpreted as meaning "Yahweh is God." From this he drew the conclusion that Yahweh "was the spiritual possession of those same nomad tribes out of which after a thousand years the children of Israel were to emerge"<sup>1</sup>: for Delitzsch held the theory, which is still very generally accepted, that Babylonia at this period had received an immigrant population originally hailing from Arabia, to which the rulers of the dynasty belonged. Sayce had called attention to these names some years earlier, but it was in the electric atmosphere created by Delitzsch's lectures that the discussion became heated. The readings were asserted to be false, not only by conservative scholars like König, but also by some who had a great reputation as Assyriologists, such as Bezold and Daiches. The arguments are much too technical for discussion here, but the general tendency of the subsequent argument seems to suggest that, while the dogmatic statements on either side ought to be qualified, it

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Delitzsch, BB, pp. 71f.

is probable, though not certain "beyond a per-adventure," that Delitzsch was right in his readings.

Later evidence has come to hand which points in the same direction. Sellin's excavations at Tell Ta'annek brought to light a tablet containing the name Ahi-jami, which is the cuneiform equivalent of Ahi-jah, and may thus contain the abbreviated form of Yahweh as its second element. The date of this tablet is variously given as from 2000-1300 B.C. Even more important, perhaps, is the name of a king of Hamath, Ja-u-bi'di. This king was conquered by Sargon II, towards the end of the eighth century. The particular value of this name, is that it has the determinative for "deity" prefixed to Ja-u, and that a variant to it is found which is written Ilu-bi'di. In the other cases some who admitted the readings denied that the name was that of a god, but in this case all doubt is removed. Other instances might be quoted, but it will suffice to say that most scholars would now grant that the divine name Yahweh was current in early times beyond the borders of Israel. The king of Hamath whose name has been quoted is, of course, comparatively late, but his name is certainly not likely to be derived from Israelite sources. His Assyrian conqueror describes him as a "wicked Hittite."<sup>1</sup>

According to Ex. 3 Yahweh is revealed as the divine name first to Moses, and verse 14 suggests an

<sup>1</sup> On this question as to the origin of the name of Yahweh cf. Kittel GVI, I, pp. 661f.; Burney, *Judges*, pp. 243-248; Driver, *Exodus*, pp. I-li.

etymology from *hayah*=to be, so that Yahweh is understood to mean "he who is." The etymology, however, is not convincing. Rather more plausible is the proposal of Haupt, accepted by several scholars and recently reaffirmed by Albright,<sup>1</sup> to read the first verb as a causative and translate "I cause to be what is." In fact we are dealing here again with a word so old that it is difficult, if not impossible, to be sure of its etymology. Nor, indeed, if we could be more sure about the etymology should we be able, on that ground, to decide what connection there may be between the different deities who bear the name. The point to be realized above all is that, whatever may be the meaning of Yahweh, it is an epithet rather than what we generally understand by a name.

We must remember that according to another Old Testament tradition God was known by the name Yahweh in the very earliest times, for Gen. 4<sup>26</sup> tells us that in the time of Seth men began to use the name Yahweh in worship. Kraeling has recently proposed an etymology of the name Jacob as Ya-agabi=Ya is the reward, or Ya has rewarded; Mercer seems rather inclined to accept this, and adds, "this would be another instance of the worship of Yau or Yahu before Moses."<sup>2</sup> We should hesitate to build any argument upon etymological bases of this kind, but, on quite general grounds, it certainly would have been easier for the children of Israel to follow the leading of Moses if the name he gave as his authority

<sup>1</sup> Cf. ZAW, 1924, p. 357.

<sup>2</sup> JSOR, 1919, p. 46.

was a name not unknown in their earlier traditions. Moses was instructed to say to them, "The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you."

If we think of Yahweh as an epithet, from an ancient Semitic root whose meaning is quite uncertain, we find no difficulty in supposing that in different places men speaking Semitic tongues may have called the god whom they worshipped by that name. This is, however, very far from saying that they worshipped the same god. The really vital matter is not primarily what men call their god, but what character they attribute to him. Even if it be true that the name Yahweh was known to the Hebrews in pre-Mosaic times the great leader certainly filled the name with a new content for his people. There is not the least reason to suppose that the name came to Israel from Babylon. Indeed it is a striking fact that most, if not all, the names found in Babylonian documents which are supposed to contain this divine name are the names of immigrants to that country. So that, if we are to assume borrowing at all in this case, Babylon is not the creditor but the debtor.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### Legislation.

THAT we are exceptionally well informed on the subject of Babylonian law is due very largely to the discovery some twenty-five years ago of the now world-famous Code of Hammurabi. It was found at Susa in Persia—the Shushan of Esther and Daniel—by French excavators, December, 1901-January, 1902. The code is inscribed upon a tapering stela of black diorite nearly eight feet high, which had been broken into three pieces; fortunately they had suffered little damage and were easily fitted together. The text<sup>1</sup> was published by Scheil in 1902, and was at once recognized as probably the most important ancient document recovered for many years. The writer well remembers studying the cuneiform text under the late Professor H. W. Hogg, who in his enthusiasm chalked the characters on brown paper,

<sup>1</sup> Transliteration and translation: Rogers, CP, pp. 398-465; Winckler, *Die Gesetze Hammurabis in Umschrift und Übersetzung*. Translation: Ungnad in Gressmann, TuB, I, pp. 141-171; Winckler, *Die Gesetze Hammurabis*; Scheil, *La Loi de Hammourabi*; Johns, *The Oldest Code of Laws in the World*, also HDB, extra vol. and *Babylonian and Assyrian Laws, Contracts, and Letters*, pp. 44-67; Handcock, *The Code of Hammurabi*, SPCK.

which he placed as a frieze round his study. That the stela was found at Susa is undoubtedly attributable to the fact that it had been carried off as booty of war by some Elamite conqueror of Babylon. Part of the text has been polished off, leaving a smooth surface on which the conqueror obviously intended to inscribe his own name and triumph, as was done in numerous other cases. The intention, however, was never carried out, so we are left to conjecture when and by whom the stela was removed from Babylon. It may very possibly have been taken by Shutruknhunde, c. 1100 B.C. The top of the stela contains a representation, in bas-relief, of a divine figure stretching out the right hand towards another figure, who stands in an attitude of adoration. The action has been variously interpreted : Rogers and Johns think it represents the handing over of the code of laws, while Gressmann supposes the god is holding out a ring and a staff. It is generally agreed that the divine figure represents the god Shamash, who was esteemed in Babylon especially as a god of law, and that the worshipper is Hammurabi himself. The information given in the prologue enables us to date the code as having been carved towards the very end of Hammurabi's reign, c. 2030 B.C. When complete it contained, according to the estimate of Johns, approximately 8000 words.

The Code begins with a lengthy prologue, relating some of the principal achievements of the great Babylonian monarch, and the glories of his reign. The gods have made him "the shepherd of his

people," "to destroy the wicked and the evil, that the strong may not injure the weak." Hammurabi further describes himself as one "who helps his people in time of need, who establishes in security their property in Babylon \* \* \* who caused justice to prevail and established law." The concluding sentence of the prologue reads, "When Marduk sent me to rule men, and to promulgate justice, I put justice and righteousness into the language of the land, and promoted the welfare of the people." The most obvious meaning of this is that some, at any rate, of the laws contained in the Code were previously existing in the Sumerian tongue, an inference that we shall find to be supported on independent grounds.

The laws themselves are followed by an epilogue, the earlier part of which resumes the thought of the prologue, and breathes a very lofty spirit. The king has not been careless or neglectful of his people : "Under my protection I hide them, that the strong may not hurt the weak, that orphans and widows may be protected in Babylon." This sentiment reminds us very forcibly of the Hebrew laws which seek to ensure that justice shall be done to the widow and orphan, whose position, with no man to stand up for their rights, was wont to be precarious in Semitic societies. In a sense the Code may be described as the first "poor man's lawyer," for the epilogue continues "let him who is oppressed, but has a cause, come before my image as a righteous king, read my inscription, heed my precious words. My monument shall

make him to know his cause, he shall find justice.” The stela itself stood originally in the temple of the Sun, Ebabbara, at Sippar, but there is no doubt that replicas of it were erected in all the important cities; indeed, fragments of such a duplicate were found at Susa. Hammurabi hoped that he had stabilized the law for all future generations. “For ever and for ever the king who is in the land shall attend unto the words of righteousness which I have written upon my monument. The law of the land, which I have given, the decisions which I have pronounced, he shall not alter.” There follows a sentence invoking a blessing from Shamash upon the king who shall carry out Hammurabi’s intention, and many sentences invoking curses, that for completeness of detail might move a Cardinal Archbishop of Rheims to speechless admiration, upon any successor who gives no heed to the words of Hammurabi.

A brief enumeration of the subjects treated in the Code will convey some idea of the wide range it covers. For convenience of reference it has been divided by translators, following Scheil, into 282 sections, allowing thirty-five for the portion that has been erased. The five sections at the beginning deal, very appropriately, with matters of judicial procedure. The remaining sections fall broadly into two main parts, (6-126)<sup>1</sup> dealing with laws relating to property, (127-282) with laws relating to persons. (6-13) deal with theft, which includes

<sup>1</sup> Numbers within brackets denote sections of the Code.

the possession of property for which no document of legal title can be produced. A single section, which might be included with these, follows, specifying the penalty for kidnapping. We pass then to a group of six sections which concern fugitive slaves, fixing a reward for the man who returns them, and a death penalty for any who shall connive at their escape or harbour them. Five sections—a possible decad?—then deal with housebreaking, brigandage, and the peculiarly interesting case of the man who, helping to extinguish a fire, takes advantage of the confusion to steal goods from the burning house. The very apt penalty provided is that the transgressor shall be thrown into the fire. The following sixteen sections give various regulations referring to the soldier and the constable. The importance of agriculture in Babylonia is seen in the fact that the next twenty-four laws relate to fields, orchards, and gardens. Then follows the lacuna, some fragments of which have been restored from other sources. The text is resumed by a group of eight regulations dealing with agents and interest, evidence of the highly developed commercial activities of the country. A little group of four sections comes next, containing the “licensing laws.” These were very severe. The wine-seller—who seems always to have been a woman—for breach of the three regulations to which a penalty is attached is thrown into the water, put to death, burned, as the case may be. The first of the three crimes seems to be very much the same thing as

the "long pull" known to the English courts. The other sections concerned with property deal with the responsibility of the carrier, with debt, and the regulations as to property left on deposit.

That part of the Code which deals with the law of the person begins with nearly forty sections treating mainly of the rights and duties of husbands and wives, followed by thirty or so which regulate the position of children, widows, adopted children, and laws of inheritance. Then come about a dozen sections assessing penalties for bodily injury to a man, and half as many relating to the case where the victim is a child-bearing woman. The remaining regulations are directed to the proper management of the trades and arts. They begin with the doctor's pains and gains, pass to the veterinary surgeon, and from him to the brander of slaves. The builder of houses and the builder of boats then come under consideration. Next, four sections on the responsibility and rewards of the boatman are followed by one giving the rule as to right of way for boats on the river, and penalty for collision. Our modern trades boards are anticipated by a number of laws fixing the rates of hire for oxen, labourers, and implements, the duties of labourers, and the hire of ships. The four concluding sections are concerned with slaves.

Even this very bald summary of the Code suffices to reveal the existence of a very highly organized state of society under the First Babylonian Dynasty. The civilization depicted is not that of a robber

empire whose chief interest is in conquest, but of a community largely employed in agriculture and trade. Indeed what impresses one most of all is that in essentials the civilization of to-day has not advanced from the conditions portrayed here nearly as much as we flatter ourselves. Evidently the Babylonians of four thousand years ago were on the whole a law-abiding people, and veracity was highly esteemed by them. The numerous contracts and other legal documents of the period that have been recovered prove that the business of the community was transacted in accordance with the laws. Evidence on the criminal side is scanty, but no doubt will show the same result if ever it should become available.

A very interesting fact disclosed by the laws is that society was divided upon a class basis. There are three main grades. At the top comes the *amelu*, who is a gentleman, or officer, and may very well represent the ruling Semitic element of the population. The word is sometimes rendered as "patrician." At the other extreme stands the *wardu*, or slave. The middle class is represented by the *mushkenu* (=Hebrew *misken*). The translation of this word is difficult. The rendering "poor man" is inadequate: in (15) he appears as the owner of slaves. Perhaps "commoner" or "plebeian" would approximate to correctness. The laws are excellent examples of class legislation. If a gentleman breaks another gentleman's bone, his penalty is to have his own bone broken (197). If he breaks a commoner's bone he pays a penalty

of one mina of silver ; if a slave's bone, half the price of the slave, presumably to the slave's master as compensation for damage to his property (198f.). This grading principle emerges again and again. The doctor is to be paid, as the doctor is paid to-day, according to the rank of his patient : a successful operation to the eye costs a gentleman ten shekels, a commoner five shekels, a slave, or, to be more exact, the master who pays for him, two shekels (215-217).

While the slave was in a sense the chattel of his owner, and could, as such, be sold, the master's power over him was not absolute, and apparently did not include a right to kill him. The slave might, with his master's consent, engage in trade and make money. If he acquired sufficient wealth he might bargain with his master for his freedom. A slave might marry a free woman, in which case the children of the marriage were free. Free men and women might adopt slaves as children, and then the slaves became free. Probably most slaves were captives of war : but sometimes a free man might be sold into slavery as payment for a debt he was unable to discharge. Documents from the reign of Hammurabi are practically silent as to the case of a man selling himself or his children into slavery. On the other hand, in texts from Larsa, of the reign of Rim-Sin, this occurs comparatively often. The difference is probably accounted for by difference in the economic situation.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Koschaker and Ungnad, *Hammurabis Gesetz*, VI, pp. 86-88.

The regulations which deal with family relationships are numerous and detailed ; they show clearly that the family was the basis of society. Marriage is a legal contract (128), and unless the proper legal documents are executed the marriage is invalid. In spite of the claims made by Delitzsch and Sayce that woman had a much higher status in Babylonia than in Israel her position seems to be fundamentally the same in both cases. That is to say, the wife becomes the chattel of the husband, who pays a price to her father for the transference of the property. But the marriage laws of the Code so qualify this right of possession that they are probably an attempt to harmonize varying conceptions of marriage which may have been held at different times.<sup>1</sup>

In the Code woman is by no means the equal of man. The indignity in her position as a purchased chattel seems, however, to have been considerably modified in many cases, for we may assume from (163) that the purchase money was not infrequently handed over to the husband as a dowry ; this dowry was not an absolute possession of the husband's, for if the wife died childless the dowry reverted to the family from which she came. Cook suggests<sup>2</sup> that the words of Rachel and Leah, Gen. 31<sup>14-16</sup>, allow us to infer "that in Israel, too, it was considered good custom to give the daughter the *mōhar* in the shape of a marriage-portion." The Book of the Covenant, also, implies something of the sort when the father who espouses a maid-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Cook, MH, p. 90.

<sup>2</sup> Cook, MH, p. 83.

servant to his son is charged to "deal with her after the manner of daughters."<sup>1</sup>

Divorce was recognized, and apparently not difficult. But a man putting away his wife<sup>2</sup>, or concubine who had borne him children, must return her marriage portion and make her an allowance for the bringing up of the children. When the children are grown up she receives "a portion like that of one son," and may marry again (137). If there are no children of the marriage the husband gives the divorced wife the bride-price, and anything her father may have contributed as a dowry. If there were no bride-price he gives, according as he is a gentleman, or a plebeian, a mina, or a third of a mina of silver (138-140).

The following section is amusing : if a wife "have set her face to go out, and has acted the fool, has neglected her house and belittled her husband," the latter can divorce her without payment, or reduce her to the position of maid-servant to a wife whom he may take in her place. A woman may, however, reject her husband ; if so the case is investigated, and if the husband is shown to have neglected her, though she was "economical and without reproach," she is allowed to take her marriage portion and go back to her own family. On the other hand, should the investigation show that she is in the wrong "they shall throw that

<sup>1</sup> Ex. 21<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> "Monogamy is the regular form of marriage : the husband may have only *one* principal wife."—Kohler and Peiser, *Hammurabis Gesetz*, I, p. 121.

woman into the waters" (142f.). If a wife is stricken by leprosy (?)<sup>1</sup> the husband is permitted to take another wife, but must continue to maintain the first in his house. Should she, however, prefer to take her marriage portion and depart, she may do so (148f.). If a husband is taken prisoner of war his wife must remain in the exile's house and be faithful "if there be still food in his house": otherwise "she may enter into the house of another" (133).

A wife may, before marriage, bind her husband by legal document not to sell her for settlement of any debt he may have incurred previously. So also the husband is not liable for any debt incurred by his wife before marriage—which surely implies that an unmarried woman may hold property. For debts contracted after the marriage both parties are liable (151f.). Women were permitted to trade, and could appear in the courts of law either as witnesses or prosecutors. A wife could hold property and leave it by will: but it must be left to her favourite child, and could not be passed to her other relatives (150). The inheritance portions of wives and children are very carefully prescribed in the Code. Concubinage was permitted. But if a childless wife gave a maid-servant to her husband to bear him children, as in the case of Sarah and Hagar, the husband could not take a concubine (144). As Cook says,<sup>2</sup> "nowhere in the

<sup>1</sup> The translation is dubious, but if not leprosy some other grievous disease is intended.

<sup>2</sup> Cook, MH, p. 114.

Semitic world do we find polygyny so restricted as in Babylonia." Sexual offences were punished by severe penalties. For rape, and adultery, the sentence was death, in the latter case for both parties (129). Adoption of children was a common practice, and is elaborately legislated for. The adopted son received the full rights of a son born to the man who adopted him.

An extremely interesting feature of the Code is its insistence upon the speaking of the truth. This comes out in the laws directed against slander. The man who "causes the finger to be pointed" against a "votary" or against a married woman, unless he can justify the charges he may have brought, is haled before a judge and has the hair "cut from his temples" (127). Another rendering of the penalty is shall have "his forehead branded." The punishment, on either rendering, comes probably to the same thing. Whether the forelock, the mark of a free man, is cut off, or the forehead branded, the man is reduced to the status of a slave.<sup>1</sup> If a man has negotiated for the purchase of a wife, and paid a price to her father, but before the arrangements are completed is slandered by a comrade: then the father may decline to give him his daughter, but must return double of any price or present he has received. In such a case the comrade is definitely prohibited from marrying the maiden himself (161). A wife accused by her

<sup>1</sup> Cf., however, the discussion by Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, II, pp. 157-159, in which it is shown that cutting off the hair, in which the soul or strength is thought to reside, has been widely used as a form of torture to extract confession of guilt.

husband of adultery, or against whom “the finger has been pointed,” in default of definite evidence may, in the former case, clear her character by an oath of purgation, in the latter, by accepting the ordeal used in the middle ages for the detection of witches—she may “plunge into the holy river” (131f.).

The man who brings a capital charge and cannot prove his case must himself suffer the death penalty; which also is the fate of him who brings “suspicion of sorcery” upon another, if the accused clears himself by ordeal (1f.). The witness convicted of perjury is punished, if the case be a capital one, with death; if the case be one in which the penalty is something milder, that penalty he must bear himself (3f.). The conduct of the judge was also rigorously scrutinized. According to (5) a judge who after giving a judgment and sealing it alters the judgment—or, as it is otherwise understood, has his verdict annulled upon appeal—must pay twelve times any penalty he may have imposed and be thrust permanently from the bench. The penalty seems rather severe, whichever rendering be adopted. Perhaps the difficulty—for it seems almost impossible that any judges would survive so searching a test unless they approached nearer to infallibility than their modern English successors—may be mitigated by remembering that the penalties given in the several laws are probably maximum penalties which would be inflicted only in bad cases. The Code clearly at times uses “shall” in the sense of “may,” as in

the case of the woman about whom it is prescribed "she shall marry again." Death is the penalty for a governor or magistrate who plunders a soldier or takes the gift which the king has given to a soldier (34). We gather from the laws that there was a regular class of official judges.

The insistence upon legal documents reminds one of the efficient German systems of registration. We have already seen that no marriage was valid unless there was a legal document expressing the marriage contract. If an agent neglects to get a sealed memorandum for money he has entrusted to a merchant he can make no claim for it (105). From (9) it may be concluded that no transfer of property could legally take place without the presence of witnesses, and presumably the execution of a legal document. Any claim to the possession of disputed property must be supported by the presence of the witnesses who had acted when the transfer of the property was made to the claimant. Failure to produce the witnesses—for which purpose the judge might allow an adjournment up to six months—was taken as proof that the claim was fraudulent, and the claimant might be put to death.

In some cases the regulations are amusingly subtle in their effort to secure absolute justice. Not long ago a Sinn Fein court in Ireland became famous for its clever solution of a difficult case brought to its cognizance. A father had left his farm to be divided equally at death between his two sons, who could not come to an agreement

on the allocation of the land. The court decided that the elder son should divide the land into two parts just as he pleased, and that his brother should then take whichever portion of the two he might select. So in the Code a gardener had to cultivate a garden for its owner four years, and in the fifth year was entitled to half the produce. This ensured that he would not hastily "give notice," and also that the garden would be well cultivated. Further, if any part of the garden was left unplanted the barren part had to be reckoned in the gardener's half. If this ingenious scheme failed as an incentive to the gardener he was caught in yet another regulation. If he did not bring the garden up to the average state of cultivation in the neighbouring gardens he was required to make good the difference to the owner, and then perform the work he had neglected (60-65).

The penalties imposed by the Code may strike us as being on the whole severe, though the contrast between them and those that prevailed in England a century or two ago would be far less impressive. What Bennett says in relation to Israel would apply without change to the Code; in the administering of justice it "would compare favourably with Greece, or Rome, or China, or with most Christian nations, before the close of the 18th century A.D."<sup>1</sup> Death appears as the punishment for nearly two-score crimes. It takes various forms, including drowning, burning, and impalement: but there is nothing so barbarous as the "hanging, drawing,

<sup>1</sup> ERE, IV, p. 283.

and quartering" which was customary in England not so many generations since. Nor must we forget, as has already been observed, that the penalties specified are to be taken as maxima. The *lex talionis* plays a great part in the Code, and in many cases elaborate care has been used to make the punishment fit the crime. The classical expression of this law is Lev. 24<sup>19f.</sup> : "And if a man cause a blemish in his neighbour ; as he hath done, so shall it be done to him ; breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth." J. Jeremias is quite right in saying,<sup>1</sup> "The dominant thought in the system of penalties provided by the Code is requital : the same mischief is inflicted on the wrongdoer that he has done to another." The simple form of the *lex talionis* appears in the laws which direct that if a man destroy the eye of a gentleman, or break his bone, or knock out the tooth of a man belonging to his own social order, his own eye shall be destroyed, bone broken, or tooth knocked out, as the case may be (196f., 200). The most symmetrical example is found in the laws dealing with the builder who puts up a jerry-built house that subsequently collapses. If the house in its fall kills the owner of the house or a son of the owner, the builder of the house is put to death in the first case, in the second his son. If a slave is killed, the builder must replace him by another slave, and whatever property is lost through the fall he must make good too. In addition he must rebuild the house. The carrying out of the *lex talionis*

<sup>1</sup> J. Jeremias, *Moses und Hammurabi*, p. 21.

in respect of the relatives of the offender appears again in (116, 210), where the offender's son is put to death, if the son of a plebian has been beaten or starved to death, his daughter if he have caused the death of a gentleman's daughter. A doctor who operates on a slave and loses his patient must replace the slave (219). The hirer of a ship (236), of an ox (245), or the herdsman of ox or sheep (263), must replace the ship or beast that is culpably lost. A kind of symbolic carrying out of the principle may be seen in the directions to cut out the tongue of the slanderer (192), and to cut off the hands of the man who strikes his father (195), or falsifies the brand on a slave (226).

Where the injured person is of lower rank than the offender a fine is regarded as sufficient punishment, and no doubt in the cases mentioned previously compensation would sometimes be accepted in place of the "pound of flesh." This same tendency to modify the *talio* by money compensations is found in Josephus and post-Biblical Jewish law.<sup>1</sup> So also the Koran encourages the idea of monetary compensation rather than the strict carrying out of the *lex talionis*.

While the penalties may seem to us often severe, and sometimes barbarous, we cannot fail to recognize also a spirit of humanitarianism breathing through again and again. The officer who has been captured and ransomed by a merchant who restores him to his home, if he cannot pay the merchant the

<sup>1</sup> Cook, MH, p. 255.

ransom money has it paid by his city temple.<sup>1</sup> If the temple cannot find the money the king must. The man's field, garden, and house are on no account to be sold for his ransom (32). A father wishing to disinherit his son must bring the matter before the judge. Even if the son has committed a serious offence against his father "for the first time the judge shall bring back his face," that is to say the culprit gets the benefit of a "first offender's act" (169). The numerous laws dealing with the debtor manifest the same spirit. The creditor who distrains on a man's ox, or corn, is himself fined (241, 114). The man whose crop was ruined by storm or drought was relieved of his debt for one year and paid no interest for that year (48). It seems curious to the modern reader that among the numerous punishments named in the Code there is no instance of imprisonment. Prisons, as we know from other texts, did exist; but apparently they were used only to house a defendant awaiting trial or punishment.<sup>2</sup>

Two striking features that recur are the oath of purgation and the ordeal. The former appears again and again. The captor of a fugitive slave, from whose hand the slave had escaped before he could be delivered up to his owner, the agent robbed of money entrusted to him, the woman

<sup>1</sup> Cf. OECT, III, p. 44, where a letter of Hammurabi's is quoted in which the king writes "(As regards) Imanimum, whom the enemy have taken—give 10 manehs of silver from the temple of Sin unto his merchant and ransom him."

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Pinches, ERE, IV, p. 260. Imprisonment as a punishment was rare also in Greek and Roman legal procedure. Cf. ERE, IV, pp. 279, 300.

suspected of adultery, the man who in a quarrel unintentionally wounds his adversary, the brander who, innocently as far as he is concerned, has been procured to falsify the brand of a slave, the hirer of an ox that is slain "by the act of God," the herdsman whose charge is killed "by the act of God," or by a lion, may each swear innocence of felonious intent before the god, and go free (20, 103, 131, 206, 227, 249, 266). Perhaps this should strictly be regarded as a case of ordeal, because the folk of that period believed that a curse solemnly invoked could be trusted to work itself out upon a guilty person. Even among modern Semites cases are not unknown where a guilty man, proposing to take such an oath, finds his courage fail him at the last minute, and confesses rather than run the risk of invoking divine punishment upon himself should he be guilty. The man charged with sorcery, (2) or the woman against whom "the finger has been pointed" (132), may plunge into the sacred river and establish innocence by escaping death at the hands of the river god.

It will be understood that a Code such as that of Hammurabi is not a new creation by its compiler : it will both codify and modify earlier laws. Indeed we are fortunate enough to have recovered one or two small groups of Sumerian laws which actually prove this. Of these the best known is a small group of six, which run as follows :

" If a son say to his father, ' Thou art not my father,' they may shave him, put him in fetters, and sell him for silver.

"If a son say to his mother, 'Thou art not my mother,' they may shave his forehead, lead him about the city, and drive him forth from the house.

"If a wife hate her husband, and say to him, 'Thou art not my husband,' they may throw her into the river.

"If a husband say to his wife, 'Thou art not my wife,' he shall pay her half a mina of silver.

"If a man hire a slave and he dies, is lost, runs away, gets locked up, falls ill, he shall pay as his hire every day half a measure of grain."

Though the tablet containing these laws comes from the time of Ashurbanipal, being part of the practice lessons for students learning to translate Sumerian into Assyrian, the laws themselves are undoubtedly much older than the Code. Pinches dates<sup>1</sup> them "3500 B.C., or even earlier." The form of several laws in the Hammurabi Code is further evidence of the same truth. It is actually in the strict sense not a code at all, but a collection of precedents or case law. The typical formula is, "If such and such a case has happened then so and so is the solution of the case." So we must recognize that the Code, while it may introduce modifications of its own, reproduces a great deal that is of much more ancient origin.

Hammurabi's desire that his Code should remain for ever the law of his country was naturally not

<sup>1</sup> ERE, IV, p. 257.

realized—the Assyrians produced a code which Mercer describes<sup>1</sup> as “nearly as important as the Code of Hammurabi.” But Hammurabi’s work continued to be the norm of Babylonian law. The scribes of Ashurbanipal made copies of it, and from these certain of the lines erased from the stela have been restored. So, too, the later Babylonians devoted careful study to the great Code, and produced a modification of it which affords an interesting parallel to the evolution of law in the Old Testament.

It is impossible for an unprejudiced reader to deny that CH<sup>2</sup> furnishes some very notable points of contact with the legislation of the Old Testament. This impression is even stronger in the case of the reader who is able to study CH in its Semitic original, for, as Johns remarked in reference to his translation *The Oldest Code of Laws in the World*, “a baldly literal translation of the Code gives a most Biblical turn to its phraseology which the easy, lucid, but paraphrastic renderings given by others perpetually disguise.” While the likeness of CH to the Old Testament legislation in general is striking, resemblances to the Book of the Covenant<sup>3</sup> are in particular so marked that we are compelled to recognize the existence of a connection between them, or between the sources which produced them. Perhaps the most popular explanation of the likeness is that offered by J. Jeremias. He thinks that Hammurabi was of Arabian origin,

<sup>1</sup> JSOR, VI, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> CH = Code of Hammurabi.

<sup>3</sup> Ex. 20<sup>13-23</sup>10.

and that pre-Islamic Arabian usages may be quoted to support the view that CH has also Arabian sources. He lays stress upon the connection of Moses with Midian, and concludes, "We have therefore ground for supposing that \* \* \* we may deduce that Moses and Hammurabi derive from a common tradition that comes from Arabia."<sup>1</sup> This is in essence also the view of Bennett—"Israelite legislation may have been influenced by it (CH) at any time; but the parallels may be largely due to common dependence on the primitive tradition of Arabia."<sup>2</sup> It is, however, by no means certain that the hypothesis of Hammurabi's Arabian origin is well-founded, and it would be safer to accept the statement of Jeremias with the qualification that for Arabia we must substitute an unknown quantity x.

In fact the difficulties of the comparison are so great that it is unwise to assert anything more explicit than a probable common Semitic origin for much in which CH and the Old Testament agree. The Code contains laws of different ages and origins, and represents a stage in the evolution of Babylonian law. So, too, in the Old Testament we have a collection of laws containing elements derived from the earliest times and from the latest. The arduous labours of scholars have resulted in a classification of the Biblical laws into groups belonging to different periods; but even now, while agreement as to the time order of these groups is

<sup>1</sup> J. Jeremias, *Moses und Hammurabi*, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> ERE, IV, p. 283.

general, there is considerable diversity of opinion in some cases as to the actual dates. The question is far too intricate for discussion here, but we may perhaps say that we think there are good, if not cogent, reasons for accepting the view that BC<sup>1</sup> is older than the period of the monarchy, to which it is very often assigned. Sellin apparently thinks<sup>2</sup> that its codification may be dated in the period of the Judges. Even if we prefer the more orthodox view of Gressmann, that BC was reduced to writing in the Solomonic period, we must still suppose that the bulk of it was the legal practice of Israel during the time of the Conquest. Many of its regulations may well go back to Moses himself; many may well be derived from the Canaanite environment.

Not only the age of BC, but also its form, makes it peculiarly suitable for comparison with CH, for it is predominantly a code of civil law. It has been asserted that CH is exclusively so: for instance Jeremias says: "In CH every trace of religious thought is absent; behind the Israelite law stands everywhere the will of a holy God, it bears throughout a religious character."<sup>3</sup> But this sharp antithesis will not stand careful scrutiny. The very author of it elsewhere says: "The question as to the connexion between morality and religion was in Babylonia no question at all: for morality, like every other manifestation of mental life, was a part of religion."<sup>4</sup> The prologue to CH shows

<sup>1</sup> BC=the Book of the Covenant.

<sup>2</sup> Sellin, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, p. 44.

<sup>3</sup> Jeremias, OTLA, II, p. 112.

<sup>4</sup> ERE, V, p. 444.

Hammurabi to have produced his Code from a profoundly religious motive, and it may be allowed to have suffused the laws with a religious spirit, exactly as is the case with the "statutes" of Ex. 21<sup>2</sup>-22<sup>19</sup>, which in themselves are purely civil regulations, with a prologue that invests them with religious significance. It is not too much to say, with Jastrow, that examination of the prologue to CH makes it clear that "the religious and ethical spirit is thus the impelling power of the most important achievement in Hammurabi's career."<sup>1</sup>

External resemblances between BC and CH may first be noticed. Each is attributed to a great historical personage, acting upon divine instigation; and though the association of BC with Moses is in fact much more remote than that of Hammurabi with CH the comparison with the king's reception of the laws from Shamash is at least illuminating. In both codes there are subsections of laws grouped together, though neither as a whole is arranged in a completely logical form. It seems clear that in the Old Testament there is a tendency to group laws into pentads and decades. Briggs worked much on this problem, and detected some such groups that had not earlier been recognized. Kent's discussion<sup>2</sup> is largely based on this principle. Some pentads may be found in BC, for example Ex. 21<sup>28-32</sup>. Lyon has dealt with the same problem in relation to CH, and detected there also numerous

<sup>1</sup> Jastrow, *Belief*, p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> Kent, *Israel's Laws and Legal Precedents*.

pentads.<sup>1</sup> But until this pentad arrangement is proved to be much more characteristic—at present many of the illustrations seem to be gained only at the expense of a rather drastic rearrangement—it will not be wise to lay upon it too much weight.

Neither code professes to cover the whole area of civil law: it is noteworthy that CH makes no provision for the case of murder. CH entirely, and BC very largely, consists of “case law.” The invariable form in CH is to state a hypothesis beginning, “If (*shumma*) so and so is the case,” and to conclude with the decision applicable to that case. Should the hypothesis be complex it is usual for each member to begin with *shumma*. For example (138-140):

“If a man has put away his bride \* \* he shall give her money as much as her bride-price \* \* and shall put her away.

“If there was no bride-price he shall give her one mina of silver for a divorce.

“If he is a plebeian he shall give her one-third of a mina of silver.”

BC consists chiefly of two elements, the *mishpatim*, or “judgments” (cf. Ex. 21<sup>1</sup>), which would be more accurately rendered “decisions,” and the *d'bharim*, or “words” (cf. Ex. 24<sup>8</sup>, where the laws previously mentioned are summed up as “all the words of Yahweh and all the judgments”). The *mishpatim* are cast almost in the same mould as the regulations of CH. Look for instance at Ex. 21<sup>7-11</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> Cf. JAOS, XXV, pp. 248ff.

" and if a man sell his daughter to be a bondwoman she shall not go out \* \* \*

" If she please not her master \* \* \* and if he espouse her unto his son \* \* \*

" If he take him another wife \* \* \* and if he do not these \* \* \* ."

There is however one interesting small variation. In CH each "if" is *shumma*: in BC the "if" which begins a section is *ki*, but the "if" of each subsection is '*im*'.

Turning to the contents as distinct from the form, we find one or two general features of agreement. Noteworthy among these is the *lex talionis*. We have already seen how prominent this is in CH. It equally underlies much of BC. Indeed in Ex. 21<sup>23-25</sup> we find a very explicit statement of the principle—"life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe." True, this passage cannot very well be original in its present position, for it is not applicable fully to the case with which it is linked. Nor can its position be justified on the plea that it is intended as a general comment on all the preceding decisions, for there is among them no case that would be covered by "burning for burning." Modern scholars are agreed that it is a general statement of the *lex talionis* introduced, possibly in a wrong place, to explain some detailed application of the principle. But even so it correctly expresses the tenor of many BC regulations. To argue from this common feature to the thesis that BC must—

as the later document—be dependent upon CH is not convincing. After all the law of retaliation is the primitive and natural method of regulating justice in communities without an elaborate legal system. It remains the law among the nomad peoples of the East to this day. And, contrary to what might seem the obvious suggestion, we find that both BC and CH are concerned, while paying much reverence to this ancient principle, really to modify rather than to enshrine it, by the substitution of compensatory payments. Much has been made of the fact that CH also has eye for eye, limb for limb, tooth for tooth, as almost consecutive penalties (196, 197, 200—the intermediate sections specify money compensations where the victim is of lower rank). But granted the common principle it would surely be impossible to express it without using such words as these.

How do the two codes compare in reference to the oath of purgation which we saw is so prominent a feature of the Babylonian legal practice? In CH a person under suspicion may swear “by the god” (20, 103, 131); or swear (206, 227)—though no doubt “by the god” will be understood here too; or swear “before the god” (249); or “declare himself innocent before the god” (266); and so escape penalty. Probably all these phrases mean exactly the same thing. In another type of case where evidence is lacking—all of them concerning property, and comparable with the case of a modern man who has to state to a railway company exactly what property was contained in a package lost or

destroyed—the procedure is very much the same ; the statement must be made “before the god” (23, 106, 107, 120, 126, 240, 281). It seems clear from (131) “she shall swear by the god and *return to her house*” that in all these cases the oath is taken at some temple or sacred place. In BC this custom is very much less prominent. Some passages in it, however, which are rather obscure and have been variously interpreted, are made clearer by these regulations of CH. Ex. 22<sup>7t.</sup> runs :

“ If a man shall deliver unto his neighbour money or stuff to keep, and it be stolen out of the man’s (i.e., of course, the ‘neighbour’s’) house, if the thief be found, he shall pay double. If the thief be not found then the master of the house (again the ‘neighbour’) shall come near *unto God* to see whether he have not put his hand unto his neighbour’s (the original owner’s) goods.”

Compare this with (122-126) of CH, which also deal with the subject of articles of value entrusted to the keeping of another. Here it is formulated that a legal document must be drawn up detailing the property—failing which no claim can be made by the owner. If the bailee disputes a claim for return, the document, which is, in a sense, sworn before the god, as such an oath would be a part of its legal form, decides the case. If part of the deposit has been stolen from the house of the bailee, together with goods belonging to the latter, he must make it good to the owner. If a man

have lost nothing of his but says that he has lost something, he shall declare his loss *before the god*, and, whatsoever he has claimed, he shall forfeit double his claim. This last sentence is exceedingly obscure. It is commonly taken to apply to the owner of the goods deposited, though, since such a man can make no claim unless he has a legal document giving an inventory of the goods, it seems impossible to suppose that he should have to declare his loss “*before the god*.” Cook is inclined to the view<sup>1</sup> that the difficulty is so great that either this last sentence does not belong to the law of deposits, or else it is a survival of earlier custom. Since a previous section takes into account that the baillee’s own goods are stolen too, one is tempted to suggest that this section may apply to a baillee who pleads inability to make good to the owner of the deposit the latter’s loss, on a false assertion that his own property has been stolen. He is convicted of falsehood by breaking down in the ordeal of swearing before the god. If this view could be taken, the case would resemble that of Ex. 22<sup>8</sup>, where the baillee undergoes the ordeal of oath before God, to clear himself of having stolen the deposit. But, however this may be, there can be no doubt that the custom of CH must determine the interpretation of the BC phrase “*come near unto God*.”

In Ex. 22<sup>9</sup> we have a rather different case :

“ For every matter of trespass, whether it

<sup>1</sup> Cook, MH, p. 226.

be for ox, for ass, for sheep, for raiment, or for any manner of lost thing, whereof one saith, This is it, the cause of both parties shall come *before God*; he whom God shall condemn shall pay double unto his neighbour."

Here the "coming before God" concerns two parties, and possibly the decision by which God condemns one may be obtained by the casting of lots, or some similar practice.

The phrase "unto God" appears also in Ex. 21<sup>6</sup>, where the master of a slave who declines to be freed is instructed to "bring him unto God." He is further to bring him to the door, or the door post, and bore his ear through with an awl. It has often been suggested that *ha'elohim* here means not "God" but "the gods," namely the household gods supposed to reside in or about the door. The Syriac reads, "unto the judges," as does the RVm both here and in the previously mentioned cases. But surely the established meaning of the phrase in the other cases must hold here too, and the thought is that the slave must take a solemn oath at a shrine before God, affirming his resolution to remain with his master. The purpose of this may be, as McNeile suggests,<sup>1</sup> to ensure that a master should not keep his slave against the latter's will. This view is confirmed also by the fact that there is no mention of taking the slave "unto God" in Deut. 15<sup>16f.</sup>, because, as that law presupposes the existence only of a central sanctuary, the provision would be almost impossible of execution.

<sup>1</sup> McNeile, *Exodus* p. 127.

It will have been made clear already that a great many subjects are treated in common by BC and CH. It would be possible to set out two dozen or more of these in parallel, but we will content ourselves with one example, in which the parallelism is exceedingly close, and which will sufficiently exhibit the general likenesses and differences for the purpose of our argument.

Ex. 21<sup>28-32</sup>.

" And if an ox gore a man or a woman, that they die, the ox shall surely be stoned, and his flesh shall not be eaten ; but the owner of the ox shall be quit.

But if the ox were wont to gore in time past, and it hath been testified to his owner, and he hath not kept him in, but that he hath killed a man or a woman ; the ox shall be stoned and his owner also shall be put to death.

If there be laid on him a ransom, then he shall give for the redemption of his life whatsoever is laid upon him. Whether he have gored a son or have gored a daughter, according to this judgement shall it be done unto him.

If the ox gore a manservant or a maid-servant ; he shall give unto their master thirty shekels of silver and the ox shall be stoned."

CH. (250-252)

" If a savage bull, in his (a hirer's) charge, have gored a man, and have caused his death, that case has no remedy.

If an ox given to goring belong to a man, and have shown to him this vice that he is given to goring, but he have not bound up his horns, and have not shut up his ox, and that ox have gored a patrician, and have killed him, he shall pay one half of a mina of silver.

If he be a patrician's slave he shall pay one third of a mina of silver.

It is clear that the same general principles govern the regulations in both cases. Just as the modern dog is entitled to his first bite without involving his master in a penalty, so the Babylonian or Hebrew ox was allowed a first "gore" and his keeper or owner was not held responsible. If the ox, however, is known by its owner to be vicious, he must be held responsible for any damage caused. Underlying both systems of penalty is the *lex talionis*. In BC the owner's life is forfeit in recompence for the life of the victim. Ex. 21<sup>31</sup> can only mean that if the victim is a young man or maiden the father of the victim may claim the life of the owner's son or daughter, as the case may be. If the victim is a slave the slave's master must have been placated originally by the life of one of the slaves belonging to the owner of the ox. This system is exemplified in almost identical fashion in the case of the builder of the jerry-built house.<sup>1</sup> The rude justice of this has, however, been modified. The owner may escape death by paying "whatsoever is laid upon him," presumably by recognized custom, or by the decision of the authorities, to the relatives of the victim. So, too, "according to the judgment," that is, on the same precedent, he may ransom the life of his son or his daughter by compensating the father of the victim. The ransom is so regular in the case of the dead slave that the price is fixed in the law itself. In Babylonia the *lex talionis* has been so thoroughly modified that in each case a money payment is

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 267.

the penalty, and in each case it is fixed in the law.

It would seem, then, that although BC is, as we now have it, so much later than CH, its regulations here belong to a more primitive stage of the law's evolution than do those of CH. Another primitive trait in BC is that in all cases the ox is to be stoned.

Is any emphasis to be laid upon the partial coincidence of the phraseology in such a case as this? It would seem at first sight that the common phraseology must be a mark of literary interdependence. On the other hand it must be admitted that in dealing with such problems as these it would be very strange if certain common features were not expressed in almost identical verbiage. "And he hath not kept him in," BC, and "and (he) have not shut up his ox," CH, for example, express a common idea in almost the same words: but it would not have been easy to express it in forms very different.

However, if coincidences of phraseology, of arrangement and order, seem to some scholars so striking that they are compelled to assert literary interdependence we are not disposed to quarrel with them, though in our judgment the weight laid upon this side of the argument has been much too great. The first impressions of its value are apt to fade when the problem is investigated more carefully. It is certainly not impossible that CH in some form might have been valid in Canaan before the Conquest, and preserved in writing. But in view of the fact that on the whole BC is

much the more primitive it is easier to believe that it preserves parts of a law-code current in Canaan, which has been preserved to some extent also in CH, and carried into a more complex and elaborate development in Babylonia. In this connection it is useful to remember that yet other codes come into consideration. From the excavations at Boghaz-keui we have been made acquainted with a number of Hittite laws, and it seems quite clear from these that Hittite legislation is closely related to the type found in BC and CH. One or two examples, which we quote from Jirku, will justify this conclusion. We have seen already that CH exemplifies in its penalties the general principle of "eye for eye, limb for limb, tooth for tooth." In the Hittite legislation we read :

"If any man knocks out one tooth, two teeth, or three teeth, of a 'patrician' he shall pay twelve shekels of silver : in the case of a slave he shall pay six shekels of silver."

We notice here the grading of the penalty according to the status of the injured person, which we find to be so prominent a feature of CH. In the latter the penalty for this particular offence is the *talio* if both parties are of the same rank, a money penalty if the victim belongs to a lower rank. The Hittite law abolishes the *talio*, and substitutes for it a money payment, no doubt expressing definitely what would be the more common practice in Babylonia, even where the case was one between equals, though the harsher regulation stands in the written law.

BC (Ex. 21<sup>12-14</sup>) distinguishes carefully between murder and manslaughter. The murderer must be put to death, but the man who kills another, not of malice aforethought, may seek sanctuary at a shrine. The form of this particular passage, it is true, suggests that it is not one of the original elements of BC; but the practice is in all probability an ancient one. Ex. 21<sup>19</sup> provides that if one man injures another in a quarrel "he shall pay for the loss of his time and shall cause him to be thoroughly healed"; this last expression seems to make it certain, by the way, that the doctor, who is expressly mentioned several times in CH, must have existed in early Israel, though there is no mention of him in BC. CH does not discuss the case of murder, but does provide (206) that if a man has struck another man in a quarrel and wounded him, he shall swear that he did it unwittingly, and shall answer for the doctor. The Hittite legislation directs that if a man wounds a patrician "with intent" he shall pay a mina of silver, but if "only his hand sinned," that is, if he did it unwittingly, his penalty shall be but twenty shekels of silver. Should the victim of assault be a slave the penalty appears to be twenty shekels of silver, but if the injury be unintentional only ten shekels.

Another interesting comparison is with Ex. 22<sup>10-13</sup>. This passage provides that a man entrusted with the keeping of ass, ox, sheep, or any other beast must, if the beast die, or be hurt, or lost, take an "oath of the Lord" that "he hath not put his hands unto his neighbour's goods," and thus

escape having to make restitution. If the beast be stolen it is assumed that he has been careless and he must replace it. If it have been eaten by wild beasts he must produce the two legs or piece of an ear that remain of the carcase, and is quit of penalty. The regulations of CH are very like these. The man (probably the herdsman) who loses a beast must make it good to the owner (263). The shepherd whose charge is killed by "act of God" or by a lion takes an oath of innocence before the god and escapes penalty. If the loss is through his own carelessness he must make it good (266-267). Turning to the Hittite laws we read that "If any man has harnessed an ox, a horse, a mule, or an ass, and the beast dies or is torn by a wolf (?) if he asserts, 'It was killed by God,' he shall be put to the oath." These illustrations make it clear that Hittite legislation moves in the same circle as BC and CH, recognizing the same general principles, and employing the same tests, such as the oath of purgation. On the whole it seems to be rather milder in its penalties and to exhibit a later stage of development. But at any rate we see that to understand clearly the origin of Israel's legislation we must not be content to compare it merely with CH; we must recognize that we see it in true perspective only against a much more extensive background of oriental law. It would certainly be foolish to adopt the theory that the laws of early Israel were absolutely new inventions. From their earliest settlement in Canaan the Hebrews must have been familiar with

Canaanite law. They may very well have combined elements from this with such older laws as they themselves possessed. Nor is there any doubt that the Canaanites were governed by laws not unlike those which prevailed in Babylonia. But it is far from being proved that Canaanite laws were simply imported from Babylon. They may certainly have been influenced by the legal codes of that great civilization, and in this way CH may have exercised an indirect influence upon BC. But, while there is every reason to believe that early Israelite legislation is much indebted to what we may conveniently call primitive oriental law, in our judgment, despite the fact that a scholar like Johns thinks<sup>1</sup> the Laws of Moses "manifest an independent development strongly *influenced by the Code of Hammurabi*," the evidence falls far short of demonstrating any direct dependence of BC upon CH.

Up to this point we have confined our survey of the Israelite legislation almost exclusively to what is embraced in BC. The question naturally arises whether in the other stages of development we find points of contact with Babylonian legislation. It has often been remarked that the Deuteronomic Code affords an analogy to CH in the fact that it has a prologue, Deut. 5<sup>1-5</sup>, and an epilogue, c.28, of which the former furnishes a remote, and the latter a closer, likeness to the corresponding feature in CH. The epilogue to the Deuteronomic Code

<sup>1</sup> Johns, *The Laws of Babylon and Laws of the Hebrew Peoples*, p. vii.

contains a long list of blessings and curses, and, as in CH, the latter considerably outnumber the former, the matter in Deuteronomy devoted to the curses being approximately four times as much as that allotted to the blessings. There is a striking difference of form, however, even in the epilogues. Hammurabi's blessings are bestowed upon the king who maintains his regulations and does not deface his inscription : his curses upon any successor who shall do the contrary. The blessings and curses of Deuteronomy are bestowed upon the people according as they shall or shall not obey its precepts. The general practice of invoking such blessings and curses upon succeeding generations would in any case make it hazardous to infer any direct influence in the case with which we are dealing. It is only fair, however, to admit that even so cautious a scholar as Cook thinks<sup>1</sup> that the parallel "may possibly imply that CH was not unknown to Israelite scribes by the commencement of the sixth century."

Naturally parallels can be found between the Deuteronomic codes and CH in matters of detail. The regulation as to false evidence, Deut. 19<sup>16-19</sup>, which provides that, if a witness lie, "then shall ye do unto him as he had thought to do unto his brother" exemplifies the same principle as CH (3), which assigns death as the penalty for perjury, or threatening witnesses, in a capital suit, and CH (4), which rules that a man convicted of bribing

<sup>1</sup> Cook MH, p. 280.

witnesses "shall himself bear the sentence of that case." The law against the refractory son, Deut. 21<sup>18-21</sup>, may be compared with CH (168f.). In the former the stubborn son must be brought "unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place," where his parents lay their complaint, and presumably, though this is not definitely expressed, the elders try the charge. The penalty is that "all the men of the city shall stone him with stones." So in CH the son must be brought before the judge. The differences are that Deuteronomy joins the mother, who is not mentioned in CH, to the father in making the charge, and that the penalty is much more barbarous than in CH. The latter instructs the judge to investigate the charge carefully, and even if it be substantiated not to punish the son for a first offence. Even if he be charged a second time and again be found guilty his punishment is simply to be "cut off from sonship."

The interesting little regulation of Deut. 22<sup>8</sup>, which provides that the builder of a house must put a parapet round the roof lest any one should fall from it and be killed, is sometimes compared with the laws of CH which inflict punishment on the jerry-builder; but though Jirku says<sup>1</sup> that here we have agreement, except for the specialization in CH of the penalties, the resemblance seems to be of the faintest. A point of almost absolute contrast, it would seem at first sight, is found in Deut. 23<sup>15f.</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> Jirku, AK, p. 121.

"Thou shalt not deliver unto his master a servant which is escaped from his master unto thee : he shall dwell with thee, in the midst of thee, in the place which he shall choose within one of thy gates, where it liketh him best : thou shalt not oppress him."

CH (15-20), which deals with the runaway slave, prescribes death for him who assists or harbours the fugitive. A reward of two shekels is paid to any one who captures and returns him. A Hittite law<sup>1</sup> prescribes that a Hittite who steals a slave belonging to another Hittite from the land Luia, and brings him back to the land of the Hittites, must return him to his owner, pay twelve shekels of silver, and make complete restitution—a noticeably mild penalty compared with that in CH.

But this contrast between Deuteronomy and CH is very much more apparent than real. The Deuteronomic law is concerned with a totally different problem, that of a slave coming from a distance and seeking refuge with a *people*. His treatment is to be the traditional treatment of a political exile who comes to England. The Hittite law and those of CH are concerned with the *individual* who defrauds his neighbour of a piece of *property* by harbouring or stealing one of his slaves. It is absurd to find here, as some have done, a deliberate protest in Deuteronomy against a harsh law of CH. The Hebrew was instructed not to covet his neighbour's manservant, and we may certainly assume that any Hebrew who stole

<sup>1</sup> Jirkku, AK, p. 122.

a slave from his neighbour would not be encouraged by the law to keep him.

This last point illustrates very well the difficulties that beset the path of a man who tries to make an estimate of the comparative "humanitarianism" of BC and CH. It is extremely easy to make false deductions from hasty comparisons. Regulations for the protection of slaves may be inspired by the effort to protect the property of their masters quite as much as by a spirit of tenderness. It has, again, been contended at times that BC shows an advance over CH in that it guards the rights of the resident alien, or "stranger", who is not mentioned in CH. Cook points out that this may be rather merely evidence as to the more civilized conditions in Babylonia, where "there was not one law for the home-born and another for the stranger—not because the Code (of Hammurabi) omitted to safeguard their interests, but because society had reached that stage where all classes come under the law and enjoy its protection."<sup>1</sup>

Nor is it by any means improbable that some of the humane laws of the Old Testament were rather in the nature of lofty affirmations which had little legal effect. It is noteworthy that in some of the commands designed for the protection of the weak, for example, Ex. 22<sup>21-24</sup>, 23<sup>9</sup>, no penalty is specified, or only such as might be inflicted by God himself. This may well be due to the fact that legal enactments were of little avail in accomplishing the end aimed at. On the whole it is wiser not to attempt

<sup>1</sup> Cook, MH, p. 276.

to draw far-reaching conclusions as to the comparative stages of humanity represented in BC and CH.

The Holiness Code<sup>1</sup> also has its points of agreement with CH. In Lev. 20<sup>10</sup> death is the penalty for adulterer and adulteress : according to CH (129) both are drowned. So, too, for the man who has guilty commerce with his father's wife or his son's wife Leviticus fixes death as the punishment—extended also to the other criminal. CH discussing the former case, and adding the qualification “after his father's death,” differentiates according as the woman is the man's own mother—in which case both are burned—or another wife, in which case he is “cut off from his father's house.” Where the guilty parties are father and daughter-in-law the man is bound and cast into the waters. (So Winckler, Rogers, and Ungnad. But the suffix to the last verb is *shi*, in which case Johns seems to be right in rendering “the man shall be bound and *she* shall be cast into the waters.” It is possible that the *shi* is an error in the original for *shu*. In this case, as in the others, we should certainly have expected both parties to be punished.)

Rather curiously, the best parallel to the Babylonian decision by ordeal is to be found in an involved passage of the Priestly Code (Num. 5<sup>12-28</sup>) where the wife suspected of adultery, but not taken in the act, is made to submit to a test by ordeal, drinking “the water of bitterness” administered by a priest.

<sup>1</sup> Lev. cc, 17-26.

It may be presumed that in the Exile the Jews would become familiar with the processes of Babylonian law; and it is true, as Cook says,<sup>1</sup> that it is in the literature of this period that features relating to cult and ritual begin to betray a significant resemblance to Babylonian usage." The Priestly Code regulations as to the shewbread (Lev. 24<sup>5-9</sup>) provide for the arranging of twelve cakes, in rows of six each, on the table before Yahweh. Babylonian rituals cited by Zimmern give cases of one, three, and six, dozen shewbreads to be laid before the deity. Haupt has acutely remarked that the Babylonian ritual expressly states that this bread shall be unleavened, and that, while no such regulation appears in the Old Testament, it was certainly observed in the later Jewish customs. No doubt too much emphasis may be placed upon such a point of contact as this, and we must remember that, as 1 Sam. 21<sup>6</sup> makes clear, the shewbread custom goes back to an early period in Hebrew history. The Egyptians had it also. Much of the elaborate regulation of sacrificial custom in the Old Testament can be paralleled too in Babylonian ritual records. The Talmudical experts assure us that "the minute precision of Talmudical legislation shows signs of acquaintance with Babylonian law, and the Babylonian origin of the legal phraseology becomes more clearly marked." We are told, too, that post-Biblical "general regulations applying to tenants are clearly framed upon Babylonian models."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cook, MH, p. 281.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Cook, MH, pp. 246, 281.

An important problem which has yet to be discussed is the possibility of external influence upon the Hebrew Decalogue, or, it might be better to say, decalogues, for we find in the Old Testament at least two, and possibly other groups of laws which might lay claim to the designation. There is first the familiar group enshrined in the formulæ of Christian worship (Ex. 20<sup>1-17</sup>) which, since it comes from E, we will call for convenience the E Decalogue. In Deut. 5<sup>6-18</sup> we have a duplicate, substantially the same, but with extremely important variations—the Deuteronomic Decalogue. Many scholars find a third decalogue—or dodecalogue—in Ex. 34<sup>10-27</sup>, which may, since it comes from J, be referred to as the J Decalogue. This shows very substantial differences from the two already named, and as compared with them is much more concerned with cultus and less with religion. It is regarded by many scholars as older than either of the others, partly on this ground. The view that it preserves the tradition as to the original form of the “ten commandments” was first put forward by Goethe, and has attracted considerable support. There is, however, difficulty in arranging its injunctions to form a group of ten : Gressmann thinks<sup>1</sup> they may be grouped as twelve commandments. The view that the predominantly cultus statement must necessarily be older than the predominantly ethical statement is arbitrary. We have always felt that the injunctions have too little unity to justify the claim that they form a

<sup>1</sup> Gressmann, *Mose*, p. 474<sup>4</sup>.

decalogue. Sellin indeed does not hesitate to call them a “confused medley of fragments from the Decalogue which is preserved in E and the cultural precepts of BC.”<sup>1</sup> Gressmann finds in Deut. 27<sup>14-26</sup> a sexual decalogue—rather unhappily named, for it is really a dodecalogue, and only four of the twelve commandments implied in the curses are concerned with sexual matters. Sellin, who accepts Gressmann’s view, calls it the “Shechem Decalogue.” Gressmann himself thinks that, though it appears in Deuteronomy, it “may derive from the work of the Elohist.”<sup>2</sup> The inter-relations of these various decalogues and dodecalogues are very intricate and difficult to disentangle; for the various views upon them we must refer readers to the commentaries and special discussions. We will limit our attention to the E Decalogue and the Deuteronomic Decalogue, or even more specifically to the nucleus which is common to them and has subsequently attracted to itself other material. In all probability the original commandments were short pithy sentences like those preserved in Ex. 20. They would run after this fashion:

1. Thou shalt have no god but me.
2. Thou shalt make no graven image.
3. Thou shalt not misuse the name of Yahweh thy God.
4. Thou shalt not profane the Sabbath.
5. Thou shalt not injure thy father and mother.

<sup>1</sup> Sellin, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, p. 45.

<sup>2</sup> Gressmann, SAT, II, 1, pp. 235, 238.

6. Thou shalt not kill.
7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
8. Thou shalt not steal.
9. Thou shalt not bear false witness.
10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house.

Such short commandments would be easily contained upon two stone tables, and the stone tables seem to be clearly historical. The arguments against taking this original decalogue back to the Mosaic period have been regarded by most recent scholars as cogent. We readily admit that they are not inconsiderable; but on the whole we are inclined rather to accept the position of Gressmann and Sellin, who believe that in this simple form the commandments are of Mosaic origin.

It happens that both from Egypt and from Babylonia we have documents which invite comparison with this primitive decalogue. The Egyptian *Book of the Dead* furnishes the former of these. It is the best known representative of a whole literature which was used as a kind of charm enabling the dead man, in whose coffin it was placed, to make his way in the after life. Copies were made on a wholesale scale with blanks for the insertion of the dead man's name. We have examples dating back to nearly the middle of the second millennium B.C. The 125th chapter of this *Book of the Dead* equips the deceased for entrance to the hall of judgment where his fate is decided by Osiris, who sits enthroned, with forty-two judges of the dead surrounding him. Before the

dead man is allowed to enter he must establish his freedom from sin.

He makes, first to Osiris, a long list of denials that he has committed sins against the cultus and ethics. Among these are :

“ I have not killed.

“ I have not committed adultery.”

The suppliant concludes with a claim “ I am pure,” four times repeated. Then follows a similar list of denials addressed to the other judges, among them being :

“ I have not stolen.”

Finally comes a series of positive affirmations, which include the strikingly familiar words :

“ I have given bread to the hungry.

“ I have given water to the thirsty.

“ I have given clothes to the naked.”

The *Book of the Dead* as a whole is an incongruous collection of magic formulæ, but these denials and affirmations do suggest that before the time of Moses the Egyptians possessed a very detailed formula covering ritual and ethical obligations.

The corresponding example from Babylonia is to be found in the exorcism series known as *Shurpu*. Originally this series appears to have been contained in nine tablets. Most of it was found in the archives of Ashurbanipal. Some tablets are bilingual, some Semitic, and one of them Sumerian. The ceremonies of exorcism employed according to the ritual of these texts are the burning (*shurpu*) of certain objects, whence comes the name of the series.

It is in the second tablet that we find a close

parallel to the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*. A sufferer, supposing his suffering to be produced by witchcraft, which has been enabled to become effective because of some offence he has committed, seeks the intervention of a priest, who performs the ritual of incantation. The priest makes inquiries from the gods as to what transgression may be the cause of the trouble. In all about a hundred are enumerated, some ceremonial, but most of them ethical.

" Has he offended his god or his goddess ?

Has he refused where he should have consented, consented where he should have refused ?

\* \* \* \* \*

Has he set son against father ?

Has he set father against son ? "

This last theme is pursued through several variations of sundered relationship, till we reach :

" Has he set friend against friend ?

Has he set companion against companion ? "

The list continues :

" Has he failed to free a prisoner or to loose a captive ?

\* \* \* \* \*

Has he despised father and mother ?

\* \* \* \* \*

Has he said ' Yes ' where he should have said ' No ' ?

Has he said ' No ' where he should have said ' Yes ' ?

Has he spoken impurity ?

\* \* \* \* \*

Has he entered his neighbour's house ?

Has he approached his neighbour's wife ?

Has he shed his neighbour's blood ?

Has he stolen his neighbour's garment ? ”

The close likeness of these last questions to the corresponding commandments of the Decalogue is very striking.

Many further enquiries follow, and at the end are the exorcism rituals, by means of which the sufferer is to be set free from the ban which causes his distress. It is obvious that the long list of questions is asked on the principle of exhausting the possibilities, so that the priest may, by going through the list, hit on the real cause of the trouble. The age of the document, it is true, is late, but there can be no doubt that the matter it contains is centuries older than the employment of it in these seventh century tablets. Jastrow, it should be said, asserts<sup>1</sup> that “the ethical features of the texts can, without much question, be put down as the work of the later editors. They belong to a period when already an advanced conception not only of right and wrong, but also of sin, had arisen \* \* .” But in view of the Egyptian parallel there can surely be no objection to taking even these features of the tablets back to a period contemporary with the early texts of the *Book of the Dead*. Accordingly we may suppose it probable that in Babylon, as well as in Egypt, there existed as early as 1500 B.C.

<sup>1</sup> Jastrow, *Religion*, p. 292.

a formulated list of ethical obligations which shows in part a noteworthy likeness to the Decalogue. Delitzsch emphasized this point, and remarked<sup>1</sup> that the Babylonians "laid stress even upon those postulates of human ethics which stand on a higher level (than the prohibition of the grosser sins such as murder, adultery, theft); to speak the truth, to keep one's promise, seemed to them as sacred a duty as to say 'Yea' with the mouth and 'Nay' in the heart was, in their view, a punishable offence." But even Delitzsch wisely refrained from asserting that the Decalogue was directly dependent upon such a Babylonian prototype, and contented himself with saying that prohibitions of this kind are indelibly stamped on every human heart. These examples from Egypt and Babylonia do, however, make it easier to accept the position that the Decalogue may well go back to Moses, who would have been doing nothing unprecedented in making a formal list of ethical and cultus regulations. We cannot forget, though, that both the Egyptian and the Babylonian parallels are, as they have reached us, embedded in a grossly material magical setting, a fact which makes it clear that they were employed not because of their ethical value so much as on account of their supposed magical potency. We believe, with Cook, that those who would derive Israel's ethical conceptions from Babylon or Egypt are making "an assumption which is entirely unreasonable and without support."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Delitzsch, BB, pp. 53f.

<sup>2</sup> Cook, MH, p. 279.

## CHAPTER XII.

### The Pan-Babylonian Theory.

OUR investigations up to this point have brought us to a position which, so far from solving all our difficulties, leaves us with a problem. We have found that on the whole there is very little to say for the theory that the early religious traditions and social customs of Israel are directly dependent upon those of Babylonia, at any rate *as these are before us in definite form*. A possible exception may be made in the case of the early Israelite legislation, which *may* have been in some measure influenced by the Code of Hammurabi. We have, it is true, found that many things were possessed by Israel in common with Babylonia. But for the most part these things appear to be a common Semitic inheritance—if indeed we should not rather substitute for “Semitic” an adjective of much wider application. The *lex talionis*, for example, is so natural to humanity in general that it may well arise independently in different places, and when it arises will be likely to express itself in precisely the same formulae. On the other hand some of the parallels seem to be of such a kind that, even though we may reject the idea that Israel is directly dependent upon Babylon, we are

compelled to assume that the common elements must go back to common sources of tradition. This is particularly the case with the stories of the Deluge, and perhaps most clearly with the legends of the ante-diluvian patriarchs. Is it possible to find a solution of the problem as to what that common source may be?

It is a noteworthy tendency of recent research and investigation to seek for a common source of early culture. The school of thought represented by Rivers, Elliot Smith, and Perry, has built up an imposing case for the theory that all things may be traced back to Egypt. The weight of evidence presented for the theory is considerable, and it cannot be hastily dismissed. On the whole, however, the theory has failed as yet to produce general conviction. One is inclined to be suspicious of any attempt to find in a particular centre the origin of all civilization. The difficulty may be illustrated from another field. Suppose a school of evolutionists should advance a theory that all mankind are derived from one original human pair, it would be open to the retort that any circumstances which might be conceived to have produced that one human pair might quite possibly have produced other human pairs in different places at different times. It may be urged that in discussing the origin of civilizations we are moving in a region where we have positive evidence to go upon. But such evidence needs to be of real cogency if it is to produce conviction, and on the evidence such theories must be judged.

For the solution of our problem one theory has been propounded, known as Pan-Babylonianism. The name may be retained for convenience' sake, though the most eminent exponents of the hypothesis regard it as a misnomer forced upon them by their critics, and would prefer to substitute for it "Pan-Orientalism." Thus Jeremias says, "we accepted the distinguishing term 'Pan-Babylonians' as a challenge, but the word 'Babylonian' should be taken as written with inverted commas."<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless the distinction seems to have little comprehensible significance, for in the same context Jeremias himself says, "the oldest and clearest statements of it (Pan-Orientalism) have been discovered to us in the district of Babylon, and \* \* \* it is founded on astronomy, which originated in Babylon." This being so it is hard to see that any real injustice is done to the theory by calling it "Pan-Babylonianism."

The theory dates from the beginning of the present century, and was the conception of Winckler,<sup>2</sup> who owed something, however, to the work of his pupil Stucken on mythology. The latter in his voluminous study of astral myths<sup>3</sup> believed that he had demonstrated that all mythology has an astral basis. He thinks that

<sup>1</sup> Jeremias, OTLA, I, p. 5<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Winckler's theory may be studied in GI, II, pp. 275-282, or in *Die babylonische Geisteskultur*. Cf. too his article *Sinai und Horeb* in EBi.

<sup>3</sup> Stucken, *Astralmythen der Hebräer, Babylonier und Aegyptier*.

all the legends of all peoples may be traced back to an original creation myth, and are derivatives from it: moreover these derivatives must have originated at a very early time, since it is not the original myth, but the derived legends, which we find scattered all over the earth. Winckler claims that he has found a formula which explains every phenomenon of the Babylonian mythology, and which is as certain as any formula of mathematics. So surely is its truth established that it may be regarded as a law, which further investigation may illustrate, but cannot disprove. Leaving aside for the moment any attempt to state the theory, we may say that it is worked out with immense learning, and has received considerable support. Perhaps A. Jeremias has done more than any one to popularize it, and his book *The Old Testament in the Light of the Ancient East* offers the best presentation of it in English. Among other eminent supporters of the theory who may be named are Weber, Messerschmidt, F. Jeremias, Niebuhr, Fries, and, with qualifications, Hommel and Zimmern; most thorough-going of all is Jensen,<sup>1</sup> who has carried the application of it to an extreme far beyond Winckler's. But, while the theory still commands the adhesion of some great names, it is not nearly so dominant as it was a decade ago.

What then is the substance of this Pan-Babylonian theory? Fundamental to it is the belief that there existed in Babylonia, long before the times to which our historical information takes us back,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Jensen, *Das Gilgamesch Epos in der Weltliteratur*.

a "view of the universe" (if we may so render the "*Weltanschauung*" which Winckler uses as a technical term for it) based upon astral theory. This view of the universe spread from its original centre all over the earth. It explains the parallelisms of mythology, and may be traced not merely in the Old Testament, but in Egypt, China, India, Greece, Western Europe, and even in the American continent. The theory survived, according to Winckler, down to the middle ages, in the form of astrology, which up to that time was practised by all learned men, on the ground that, as this world is a reflection or counterpart of the star world, from the events in the latter the course of events in the former might be deduced.<sup>1</sup> This view of the universe is to be regarded as regulative of human thought much in the same way as the Copernican astronomy, which displaced it, has become, or as the modern conception of evolution is by way of becoming. Each of these would be a "*Weltanschauung*" in the Wincklerian sense. It is admitted that there is no documentary statement of the theory in the Babylonian records which have come down to us: the contents of the doctrine have to be inferred by arguing back from these records and from the myths of various countries as we find them. It is argued that these are common property among the peoples, displaying likeness not merely of content but also of form and expression, and, being all evolved from one or two simple astral theories, must therefore have

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Winckler, GI, II, p. 275.

a common source. Since they involve a knowledge of astronomical phenomena, where can this primitive source be found but in Babylonia, which is not merely the traditional home of astronomy, but can be shown by documentary evidence to have reached a comparatively high level in that science at a very early period? The exponents of the theory hold that evidence goes to prove that the doctrine must have originated in the Twins era,<sup>1</sup> the date of which is given by Winckler as the time between 5700 and 2500 B.C. The astral theory which underlies the Pan-Oriental *Weltanschauung* is supposed to have been the creation of priests, being based upon astronomical observations which only they were likely to have made. It is sometimes represented as having been originally of pantheistic, if not even of monotheistic, tendency. That is to say, its holders thought of divinity behind all the phenomena of nature, the gods, such as the stars, being regarded as but embodiments or manifestations of that divinity. The gross polytheism of the popular religion as we find it is treated as a corruption of the pure astral teaching, or as a condescension to the meaner intelligence of the uninstructed multitude. The heavens, so much more brilliant in the region of Babylonia than in our cloudy and rainy climate, were then thought to be very near the earth: to build a tower whose top should rise into the blue

<sup>1</sup> i.e., the period during which at the spring equinox the sun rises in the sign of the Zodiac known as the "Twins." Kugler, *Bannkreis*, p. 149, gives the period as 6534-4383 B.C., a considerable correction.

of the skies, or to find a mountain whose summit should pierce it and form a dwelling-place for the gods, with the sky as its sapphire pavement, was not so extravagant a supposition as it seems to us. And the observed facts that certain phenomena in the heavens recurred with regularity, and that they could therefore be predicted, suggested that in the heavens, if anywhere, the divine will could be discovered and the divine intentions ascertained.

It is at this point of the theory that Winckler's great formula which solves all the problems of the Babylonian mythology comes into play. Earth and heaven are parts of one harmonious system ; so the laws which rule the movements in the starry skies will rule also the events on earth, both great and small. Therefore all may be explained by the application of the simple formula *Himmelsbild-Weltbild*, that is to say, Heaven and Earth are each the image or reflection of the other. As a general idea this, it will be said, is very familiar in religious philosophy. So, for example, the writer of Hebrews thinks of the Mosaic tabernacle as but an inferior copy of an original tabernacle which existed in heaven, and which was shown as a pattern to Moses in the Mount.<sup>1</sup> But this law of correspondence as worked out in the Pan-Babylonian theory is very much more thorough-going. The Babylonian recognized the earth upon which his feet were planted, an air region above his head, and a subterranean ocean whence came the springs and rivers. This tripartite division, according to

<sup>1</sup> Heb. 8<sup>1-5</sup>. Cf. Peake's notes in *Century Bible*.

the theory, is reflected in or from the heavens. There is a celestial earth, the Zodiac, the scene of the most important activities in the stellar region, the pathway along which the most prominent of the heavenly bodies, the sun, the moon, and the five planets visible to the naked eye, pursue their regular courses. As Jeremias puts it, in a neat figure, "to the Babylonians the moving stars serve as interpreters of the Divine will, and in relation to these the whole heaven of fixed stars is as a commentary written along the margin of a book of revelation."<sup>1</sup> The celestial air region is that on the North side of the Zodiac, the north pole of the universe being the throne of the chief deity. Separated from this region by the Zodiac, which was regarded as a kind of causeway, is the celestial water region, the heavens to the South of the Zodiac. Each pair of regions is presided over by a special deity : the two air regions are ruled by Anu, the two earth regions by Bel (=Ellil), the two water regions by Ea. Compare *enuma elish* IV, l. 146—"He caused Anu En-lil and Ea to occupy their abodes," said of Marduk after he has erected the firmament, measured the heavens, and the watery deep, Apshu.

Winckler further maintains that the theory embraced also a tripartite division of the earth's surface, in which the land forms the centre, corresponding to earth ; the ocean, beginning at the Persian Gulf, the Southern division, answering to

<sup>1</sup> Jeremias, OTLA, I, p. 10.

the watery region; while the corresponding air region lies in the far North. As Kugler remarks,<sup>1</sup> this last is a strange conception, and has no basis in the cuneiform records. Winckler produces in support of it a quotation from Herodotus, where Xerxes says, "When we shall have conquered the land of the Greeks (as the most northerly land he knew) then Persia will march with the ether of Zeus (that is, the air region of Anu)." But Winckler takes the quotation from its context, and distorts it by his paraphrastic translation and expansions. What Xerxes actually said was, "We will cause Persia to march with heaven: for the sun will shine on no land that marches with ours, for I will unite all lands into one land, when I traverse Europe." This is merely the ancient version of the "empire on which the sun never sets." Further it would be strange, as Kugler emphasizes, to find the ether of Zeus in the North. So the foundation for the theory is a late quotation, misrendered, and even then needing to have the crucial points supplied to it! It is only a minor detail in the imposing structure, it is true, but this is unfortunately typical of much of the reasoning that goes to the building up of the whole fabric.

Even the Zodiac falls into three corresponding parts, having its air, earth, and water regions. This detail of the theory is subjected by Kugler to very acute criticism. Winckler's own statement of it runs:

<sup>1</sup> Kugler, *Bannkreis*, p. 54.

"Also the Zodiac is divided into an air, an earth, and a water region, each of them covering four of the Zodiac's signs. Hence the water region of the Zodiac: Aquarius, Pisces, to which originally Aries (and still earlier Taurus) belonged."<sup>1</sup>

On the face of it this seems strange. That the "man who bears the watering-pot" and the "fish with glittering tails" should belong to a water region seems reasonable, but what are the ram and the bull doing in this galley? Capricornus, the goat, which follows next in order to the fishes, is represented by a symbol which is reminiscent of the hybrid goat-fish that figures in Babylonian art. Kugler has argued<sup>2</sup> that the sign corresponding to the Ram in the Babylonian Zodiac was a similar mixed creature. If this were admitted it would be possible to find four consecutive signs answering reasonably to a water region in the Zodiac. But if so Winckler would be left with Leo (the lion) Cancer (the crab), Gemini (the twins), and Taurus (the bull) for his air region. Kugler's caustic comment is, "The two quadrupeds in the *air* region of the Zodiac!" He makes another good point in observing that on Winckler's supposition we should have expected to find bird signs in the air region.

But the general theory is carried out in another and more important direction. The geography of the earth's surface has a corresponding reflection in the

<sup>1</sup> Winckler, *Die Weltanschauung des Alten Orients*, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Kugler, *Sternkunde*, I, pp. 32ff.

heavens. Each land displays itself as a microcosm of some part of the starry heavens. Even the districts and provinces have their counterparts in the sky, and in particular the central sanctuary of each country, as the dwelling-place of its deity, corresponds to some part of the heavens where also that deity is enthroned, and both bear the same name. So we may find in the heavens not only the air, earth, and water regions, but even a Babylon, an Eridu, a Tigris and a Euphrates. "Even the names of the temples of Marduk and Bel have their celestial counterparts. All earthly being, becoming, and passing away may therefore be gathered from the heavens."<sup>1</sup> Winckler even applies his principle of correspondence to man, who is a microcosm of the macrocosm.<sup>2</sup>

Apart from what may be called his general principle of symmetry, Winckler relies for the proof of his theory that the earthly and celestial topographies are counterparts each of the other chiefly upon the fact that some few stars or constellations have names borrowed from those of rivers or temples. But, as Kugler very pertinently inquires, since there was not a sufficient number of gods to furnish names for all the stellar phenomena what else could the Babylonians do but borrow such other names for their celestial map?<sup>3</sup>

Again, on the hypothesis that between the celestial and terrestrial topographies there exists that close correspondence which the Wincklerian

<sup>1</sup> Kugler, *Bannkreis*, p. 5. <sup>2</sup> Cf. Winckler, GI, II, p. 276.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Kugler, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

theory postulates, we should reasonably expect to find considerable indications of it in the actual astrological texts. The interpretation of these is one of the most difficult and laborious tasks confronting the Assyriologist, a task, moreover, that demands from those who essay it not only a competent knowledge of the language but an expert training in astronomy. This combination of qualifications is naturally rare, and some of the more daring inferences of the Pan-Babylonians appear to have been due to an inadequate grasp of the astronomical principles. In particular Jeremias seems to have exposed himself to conviction not only of careless mistakes but even of gross blunders in these matters. It is a subject for congratulation that the investigation of this side of Assyriology, which owes much to the pioneering work of Epping, is being carried a long way forward by the labours of Kugler, whose results are embodied in his monumental *Sternkunde und Sterndienst in Babel*. Kugler's very definitely expressed verdict is that the study of the astrological documents, so far from supporting the Wincklerian hypothesis of correspondence between the celestial and the terrestrial topography, is fatal to its acceptance. His grounds for this verdict are summarized in *Im Bannkreis Babels*.<sup>1</sup> He first points out that the Babylonian astrologers seem for their predictive omens to have made use of practically every heavenly phenomenon that could be observed by the naked eye. Not merely the more striking

<sup>1</sup> pp. 100-116.

appearances of the sun and moon, but also those of the planets and fixed stars, come into consideration. Conjunctions, oppositions, heliacal risings and settings, brilliance and dimness, variations of colour, all these have their meanings. Meteors, too, are brought into the system, and thunderstorms. In other words the astrologers requisitioned for their purpose everything possible. "Thus there can be no doubt at all that here if anywhere the principle upon which the so-called correspondences of the celestial and the terrestrial are based should be prominent."<sup>1</sup>

The oldest surviving astrological document, a series known as *enuma Anu "Bel*, does indeed relate its omens to the four lands Akkad, Elam, Subartu, Amurru, the four great countries of the time of Sargon I, c. 2800 B.C., though "there is no reference of the omens to individual provinces or cities in those regions." Another point that tells against the "correspondence" theory is that the application of an omen is affected by the time when the phenomenon takes place, day or night. The significance of an omen might be altogether different according even to the particular watch in which it happened. The deduction to be drawn from an omen depended also upon the date by the calendar. Kugler provides an interesting demonstration of his point that there is no real connection between corresponding parts of heaven and earth, such as the Pan-Babylonians postulate, by arranging in columns the countries to which certain omens

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 105.

apply, according as the celestial phenomena on which they are based appear in the North, South, East or West.

Appearing in	Omen (a) affects	Omen (b) affects	Omen (c) affects	Omen (d) affects	Omen (e) affects
S	Akkad	Elam	Elam	Akkad	Subartu
N	Subartu	Akkad	Akkad	Elam	Amurru
E	Elam	Subartu	Subartu	Subartu	Elam
W	Amurru	Amurru	Amurru	Amurru	Akkad

Surely he is justified in asserting that the capricious variation of the countries in this table "clearly shows that the Babylonians had not the remotest idea of presupposing a local harmony between heaven and earth."<sup>1</sup> It is conceded that, like the Greeks, the Babylonians in the latest periods did associate definite countries with special signs of the Zodiac, but Kugler's opinion is that even as late as the seventh century B.C. there is no justification for the detailed application of the *Himmelsbild-Weltbild* formula which Winckler assumes to have dominated Babylonian astral conceptions so many centuries earlier. Our own conclusion is that the formula is really true only in a limited sense, namely that the Babylonians divided the heavens into an air, an earth, and a water region.

But the essential importance of the general theory lies "in the application thereof." The pure Pan-Babylonian doctrine not only provides the key

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Kugler, *Bannkreis*, p. 108.

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to all the problems of the earth's mythologies, but, by means of the astral conception of the universe which it presupposes, interprets all the beliefs of the ancient world concerning the gods and religion, explains all its legends, is the basis of such science as it possessed, and even furnishes the true understanding of narratives which on the face of them would seem to be purely historical.<sup>1</sup> In Winckler's hands the stellar chart provides a number of "themes" or "motifs" which may be used to solve all the problems of mythology, legend, or history, just as the operating formulæ of mathematics deal in a few lines with most complicated difficulties.

The astral conception identifies the various heavenly bodies with distinct deities. The sun is Shamash, the moon Sin, the five great planets Venus, Jupiter, Mercury, Mars, and Saturn, are Ishtar, Marduk, Nabu, Ninib, and Nergal, respectively. Venus, however, is generally reckoned not with the other planets, but as forming a triad with the sun and moon. The minor deities are associated with various fixed stars. From the astronomical phenomena observed in connection with the heavenly bodies arise the myths related of the gods. The calendar, also, plays a prominent part in the Pan-Babylonian theories, supplying, so to speak, time motifs, as the stellar universe supplies space motifs. The seven days of the week are associated each with a particular star and god, a relationship

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Jastrow's Address in *Transactions of the Third International Congress for the History of Religions*.

which Jeremias holds to be primeval.<sup>1</sup> Even the several hours of each day have their astral affinities, and the months, regarded as the days of the year, are dedicated to astral gods. Thus time, as regulated by the movements of the heavenly bodies, is easily brought into the scheme, and almost any time reference in a legend can be explained as a myth motif.

Great play is made with sacred numbers.<sup>2</sup> The number 2 suggests sun and moon, day and night stars, half-moon phases, the upper and lower halves of the universe—An-shar and Ki-shar. Of course 3 is the number of the great triads of gods, such as Anu, Bel, and Ea ; or of the sun, moon, and Venus, which last was, as we have already mentioned, reckoned rather with the two great luminaries than with the other planets. This last group of three was looked upon as a trinity governing the Zodiac, and the corresponding gods, Shamash, Sin, and Ishtar, constituted the second great divine triad. The four phases of the moon and of Venus, the four seasons of the year, the four great planets other than Venus—Jupiter, Mars, Mercury, Saturn—invest the number 4 with sacred significance. 5, again, is the total number of the visible planets, of the elements—ether, fire, water, air, earth—and of the five colours which correspond to the planets and elements. 6 is the number of the double months into which the year was once divided, and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Jeremias, OTLA, I, p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Winckler, GI, II, pp. 279-282; Jeremias, OTLA, I, pp. 62-69.

of an older reckoning of six rather than twelve signs of the Zodiac. No difficulty is presented by 7, the number of the five planets plus sun and moon, or by 12 as the number of months, or of the number of intercalary days which bring up the true lunar year of 354 days to the solar year of 366 days. And so the process goes on for larger numbers. Colours, too, are of great significance—white corresponds to Venus, red to Mars, blue to Mercury, yellow to Jupiter, black to Saturn, and, of course, each to the astral deity associated with its special planet. Green is associated with the moon, and no doubt there is some mythological interpretation of green cheese! Further elasticity is imparted to the system by provision for the easy interchange of deities. Since the sun, moon, and Venus, each display four phases<sup>1</sup> it is readily understood why the same myths are related in connection with each of the corresponding deities, any one of which may, at a pinch, be substituted for any other. The four remaining planets are allotted to the four several phases of each member of the great triad, and any one of them “may be manifested under the name of another, or in the character of sun, moon, or Venus.”<sup>2</sup> On the other hand the twins, sun and moon, may manifest themselves as a pair of planets, Jupiter and Saturn, who are repeatedly referred to as the “great twins,” or Mars and Mercury, the “small twins.”

<sup>1</sup> Kugler emphatically denies that the Babylonians ever knew that Venus had phases. Cf. *Bannkreis*, pp. 58-60.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Jeremias, *Handbuch*, p. 94.

It may readily be conceded that the Pan-Babylonians have produced some striking results by the application of this elaborate series of "operators," if we may return to our mathematical figure, to various Biblical stories and classical legends. But, impressive as these results may seem at first sight, they lose much of their power to produce conviction when we reflect how easily the results are gained when the premisses are granted. The ingenuity that marks them is of the kind we associate with cryptograms. Whatever number may happen to be mentioned in a story, even if it should not be one of the recognized sacred numbers with astral significance, can easily be manipulated. If 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12 have each such hidden meaning, it is fatally easy to reduce any number " $x$ " to the product or sum of sacred units, and so to invest " $x$ " with astral significance. One or two examples of the method of using numbers may be given. Kirjath-arba, which may be rendered into English as "City of Four," must mean "City of Arba, a moon god," because the moon has four phases. Beersheba, which may mean "the seven wells," also represents the moon, because each phase of the moon has seven days. Isaac, who lived there, becomes accordingly, a moon deity.

It is easy to reduce Jacob to the same status, for had he not four wives, and are there not four moon phases? The twelve hundred pieces of silver which Benjamin received are just forty times thirty, and are there not thirty days in a month?

His five changes of raiment represent the five epagomena, or intercalary days, of the Babylonian year.<sup>1</sup> Should a number show itself obstinate under this treatment, even more violent methods are employed to bring it into subjection. An excellent example of this may be found in the treatment applied to the story of David and Goliath. According to Winckler and Jeremias<sup>2</sup> this is simply honey-combed with astral motifs. Goliath represents "the power of the underworld, the winter side of the cycle, the dragon of chaos," and David is the representative of the god of light who slays the dragon. Among the details advanced in support of the former part of the theory are :

1. The name Goliath corresponds to the Babylonian *gallitu* (*gallatu*), which means "sea." Therefore we may perhaps in the name Goliath find the dragon Tiamat.

2. Goliath presented himself with his boastful challenge forty days, morning and evening. These represent the forty days, roughly speaking, during which the Pleiades, of evil omen, disappear in the light of the sun, "and are heliacally abolished at the beginning of spring."<sup>3</sup>

3. "In the statement of his (i.e., Goliath's) height—six ells and one span—lies the other presentment of the winter time. Instead of the forty days of equinoctial storm we have the 5½

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Clay, *Amurru*, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Jeremias, OTLA, II, pp. 182f.

<sup>3</sup> Jeremias, *op. cit.*, I, p. 68.

epagomena<sup>1</sup> which precede the winter time, the new year, and which are often given in a round number as five or six \* \*. The motif was no longer understood by the author of our story, and he corrected it to six ells and one span, instead of five and a span."

4. In drawing near, Goliath uses mocking words. This is a regular formality constantly recurring in the dragon combat. Compare the way in which Tiamat mocks Marduk.

And thus we have proof that Goliath is invested with the features of the chaos dragon! Let us examine the four points in detail.

1. The equation Goliath=*gallitu* is precarious: whereas Winckler, who miswrites *galittu*, states it positively as true, Jeremias more wisely introduces a "perhaps." Kugler—whose treatment<sup>2</sup> of this particular case is extremely good—suggests a much more plausible derivation for Goliath, if the word is to be deduced at all from a Babylonian root, namely *galtu*=terrible, fear-inspiring. He objects further that *gallitu*, a standing epithet of the sea (=undulating?) is a feminine formation, whereas Goliath is certainly not a masked woman. This objection is perhaps more impressive than effective, because if we grant the possibility of the hypothesis that Goliath is a symbol of Tiamat the use of the feminine name might be accounted for.

<sup>1</sup> i.e., the  $5\frac{1}{4}$  days which must be added to the 360 in a solar year of 72 five day weeks in order to give a true solar year. Cf. Jeremias, OTLA, I, p. 65.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Kugler, *Bannkreis*, pp. 35-45.

2. That the number forty may have been frequent in myth, and at times have mythical significance, need not be disputed. But it seems quite clear that from such a use it passed into the language of the popular stories with the meaning merely of a large round number ; it should, therefore, not be invested with mythical significance unless it can be shown independently to have been definitely employed with that intention. Nor is it demonstrated that the Babylonian documents afford any basis for the statements of Jeremias that the Babylonians recognized "forty days as an abstract of the winter time."

3. This mythical trait is not found in the text—which gives the height as six ells and a span—but imported by Jeremias, quite arbitrarily, when he says the original text must have read  $5\frac{1}{4}$ , and has been "corrected" by some one who failed to understand the symbolic meaning of  $5\frac{1}{4}$ . If so, why did he correct it ? Surely further comment on this is superfluous ! The Pan-Babylonian apparatus for extracting significance from numbers is so very powerful that we may well refuse it the further concession of inventing the number to begin with. It is as though, failing to crack a nut with a steam-hammer they employed lyddite to blow it up !

4. That a challenger should address mocking and arrogant words to his foe is surely so natural a thing that we require very strong proof before we agree to read the action as a motif. We turn expectantly to Jeremias's treatment<sup>77</sup> of Elijah to

see whether when the prophet taunts the prophets of Baal we are not to discover a Marduk-Tiamat motif, and are rather surprised not to find the suggestion. How little do small boys who hurl scornful epithets each to the other before the combat realize that they may be providing material of mythical significance for a Pan-Babylonian spectator !

In David Jeremias finds no fewer than seven motifs of the dragon-slayer, but these are no more convincing than those discovered in Goliath. Naturally the five smooth stones which David put in his scrip have a symbolic meaning. "In the myth of the year the giant who incorporates the five intercalary days before the beginning of spring is opposed by a little one who corresponds to the fraction which is contained in the calculation of the equalized solar and lunar year : a quarter in addition to five. The five stones correspond besides equally to the winter giants." This is most confusing. First the six ells and a span, that is  $6\frac{1}{2}$  ells, are assumed to be a mistaken correction for five ells and a span, and this is made out to be  $5\frac{1}{2}$  ells instead of  $5\frac{1}{4}$ . So we obtain the  $5\frac{1}{2}$  epagomena. Then this motif, which is found in the portrayal of Goliath, is made to figure also for David as the little combatant opposed to the giant, the quarter in addition to the five. But David's five stones also appear to represent the epagomena, and so in the portrayal of David we have a giant motif for Goliath. In other words, either party to the combat may furnish a motif for the other.  $6\frac{1}{2}$  may be arbitrarily altered to  $5\frac{1}{2}$ .

and this may have the same significance as 5! As Kugler says, "Had the giant been actually 5½ ells high, and had the young hero after discharging his five large stones against him in vain finally killed him with a sixth little stone we might have admitted, 'That is striking!' "<sup>1</sup> Without staying to discuss the other alleged motifs in the combat, which are certainly no more convincing than those we have already dealt with, we may express our agreement with Kugler's final verdict when he continues, "The actual material of the story, however, shows that not merely every mythical, but even every symbolic, interpretation of the Goliath-David fight is fantastic."

The triad of divinities Sin, Shamash, and Ishtar, is reckoned in the Pan-Babylonian theory as a family, the children of Anu, the Father of the gods, or of Ellil, the Ruler of the Zodiac. In the Tammuz myths Ishtar appears both as sister and spouse of Tammuz. Hence it is deduced that Shamash and Ishtar in the triad bear to each other the relation of wedded brother and sister. But also Sin may be regarded as the father of Shamash and Ishtar, or Shamash as the father of Sin and Ishtar.<sup>2</sup> These relations seem perplexing, but are very convenient for the purposes of the Pan-Babylonian theory. Sarah is both sister and wife to Abraham. Obviously then Abraham must be Tammuz, and Sarah Ishtar. It follows that, since Sin is the father of Ishtar, Abraham is a

<sup>1</sup> Kugler, *Bannkreis*, p. 45.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Jeremias, OTLA, I, pp. 86f.; *Handbuch*, p. 232.

"hero-deposit of the moon-god."<sup>1</sup> And, if it had been desired to show that Abraham was a solar rather than a lunar deity, it would only have been necessary to take the alternative group, according to which Shamash is the father of the other two. Naturally when Isaac asserts that his wife is his sister he lays himself open not only to the wrath of Abimelech, but also to the manipulations of the Pan-Babylonians.

Again, Abraham and Lot, who must always keep apart and can never agree, are a pair of Dioscuri, or Heavenly Twins. Since Abraham represents a lunar deity Lot must stand for the other member of one of the Twin pairs—sun and moon—which we saw were recognized in the skies. Jacob and Esau fall an easy prey to the "twin" interpretation, and since Jacob shows lunar traits Esau must be a solar deity. Is not Esau represented as ruddy, and does not red hair stand for the rays of the sun in the motif scheme? <sup>2</sup> What better confirmation could be wanted?

Winckler was not content to apply this kind of treatment merely to the patriarchs: Saul and David are dealt with in the same way. He believed that he had demonstrated that what he regarded as legendary adornments in the Old Testament stories were no loose and capricious additions, but evidence that a definite system, in other words his "Ancient-Oriental conception of the Universe," underlies the work of the Biblical writers. Jensen

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Winckler, GI, II, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Jeremias, OTLA, II, p. 51.

has carried out the theory to the wildest extremes. He not only employs the Gilgamesh Epic as the key which solves all problems in the legends of classical antiquity, but maintains that the life of Jesus, as we have it in the New Testament, is simply a variation of the Epic. Nor does the apostle Paul fare better than his Lord.<sup>1</sup> Winckler himself, however, seems to have realized that he was proving too much, for a little later in his discussion he qualifies what he has been saying earlier with the admission "not everything clothed with mythological-astrological trappings should *ipso facto* be rejected as having no historical value."<sup>2</sup> Jeremias, despite his thorough-going advocacy of Pan-Babylonianism, is even more careful to avoid the reduction of the Old Testament to a book dominated by that system. Though he finds astral motifs in the story of Elijah he says definitely that "The historical and the religious importance of Elijah is in no way diminished by unveiling motifs of mythology and fable."<sup>3</sup> He recognizes, too, the fatal facility of the Wincklerian method. "If we take any historical episode whatever from antiquity which is told without artificial motifs, and try to ornament it by the help of known motifs, we shall find how the facts always lend themselves to it. Naturally there is the possibility in every case that

<sup>1</sup> Jensen has published a book with the significant title, *Moses, Jesus, Paulus. Drei Sagenvarianten des babylonischen Gottmenschen Gilgamesch.*

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Winckler, GI, II, p. 296.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Jeremias, OTLA, II, p. 236.

the motifs have fitted with history. The literary critic should therefore beware of concluding solely from the application of mythological motifs that the story has no foundation in history."<sup>1</sup>

Kugler has provided an amusing proof of this truth by his ironical demonstration<sup>2</sup> that Louis IX of France is shown by a long series of traits to be nothing but a French Gilgamesh, an attempt much more convincing than what is offered in connection with the Old Testament by the Pan-Babylonians. Another difficulty which the hypothesis of Winckler seems to ignore is the inconceivability of the Old Testament writers, who are utterly opposed to astrology, deliberately embodying Babylonian astral-mythology in their writings.

To deny the elaborate ingenuity of the Pan-Babylonian theory would be absurd. In fact one of the serious criticisms of it is, if a colloquial phrase may be pardoned, that it is "too clever by half." It may be granted, moreover, that the astral element in the Babylonian religion is very old, and perhaps dominant. But when the theory can be tested in the region of fact as distinct from hypothesis it fails to stand the test. It makes great play, for example, with a wonderful theory of motifs of the ages, which presupposes that the Babylonians at a very early date were acquainted with the precession of the equinoxes. Kugler seems quite clearly to prove that this supposition is false. Indeed underlying the whole argument

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Jeremias, OTLA, II, p. 180.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Kugler, *Bannkreis*, pp. 130-146.

of the Pan-Babylonians is the idea that the Babylonians were in possession of an advanced science of astronomy, an idea which is based on mere inference, and which seems not to harmonize with much documentary evidence that such astronomical knowledge as they had attained until very late was crudely empirical. The precarious nature of this idea is aptly illustrated by the extraordinary note of Jeremias OTLA, I, p. 21<sup>1</sup>: "Had the ancients optical instruments? and can we thus explain their observations of Mercury (?) and Venus in different phases, the moons of Jupiter (?), etc.? The invention of the telescope in A.D. 1608 may mean the rediscovery of a miracle of civilization lost for thousands of years." The real formula of Pan-Babylonianism is not *Himmelsbild-Weltbild*, but "whatever is improbable is obvious, and what is impossible is probable."

We feel, then, that, whatever may be the true solution of the problem presented by the affinities between the traditions of the Old Testament and those of the Orient, it will not be found in Pan-Babylonianism. The fortunes of that theory are concisely summed up by von Oefele, who writes: "at first the new exegetical theory encountered very strong opposition, but afterwards seemed to have won a general assent; more recently the work of Kugler \* \* has given it a partial reverse."<sup>1</sup> We think the assent was wide-spread rather than general, and that the "partial reverse" would be better described as a staggering blow. An eminent

<sup>1</sup> Cf. article, *Sun, Moon, and Stars*, ERE, XII, p. 61.

Assyriologist lately asserted that the theory is as "dead as a doornail." This may be a slight exaggeration. The corpse still shows some faint signs of life when in a book such as the *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics* von Oefele writes as an adherent of the theory, stating that he has "arrived at the same results as Winckler, though by a very different path."<sup>1</sup>

If any solution of the problem is to be found it will be on the earth and not in the sky. The most persuasive theory yet advanced is that of Clay. In his *Amurru, the Home of the Northern Semites*, he endeavoured to prove that Semitic culture is to be traced originally neither to Arabia nor to Babylonia, but to Amurru, which name covers the countries we know as Palestine and Syria. He has developed the thesis further in his later books *The Empire of the Amorites* and *The Origin of Biblical Traditions*. Clay believes that as early as the fifth millennium B.C. there was a flourishing Amorite Empire. To this source he traces the Babylonian and Assyrian language and much of the Babylonian culture. Even the Sumerian laws, he supposes, are of Amorite origin, and many of the gods whom we think of as being Sumerian or Babylonian he regards as originally Amorite deities. If the theory is accepted our problem will be solved, for to such an Amorite Empire it would be easy to ascribe what is common to the Old Testament and Babylonia. A great deal of the evidence offered is etymological, and

<sup>1</sup> Von Oefele, *loc. cit.*

such evidence is always open to suspicion ; another obstacle in the way of the hypothesis is that the very existence of the Amorite Empire is inferred rather than proved. This latter difficulty will be removed, Clay believes, by the results of more extended excavation. For a long time the hypothesis was regarded as freakish, but the patience with which its author has built up his case has lately won for it more serious consideration. It is certainly noteworthy that he is able to claim the adhesion of so fine an Assyriologist as Ungnad. The latter, in *Die ältesten Voelkerwanderungen Vorderasiens*, " writes that the Arabian and African origin of the Semites is becoming more and more improbable as investigations advance ; that the Semites were already in Syria, 4500 B.C. ; that it was a highly cultivated land ; that the Semitic Babylonians came from Amurru ; that the great Amorite Empire, which the Semites had created, had been destroyed by the Hittites and Egyptians ; and that the Amorites very probably had an alphabetic script long before the earliest that is known."<sup>1</sup> Although the theory cannot yet be said to have been demonstrated, it deserves serious consideration ; and, whatever may be the final verdict upon it, we feel sure that in some such direction as this the true solution of our problem is to be sought.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Clay, *Origin*, p. 31.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### Retrospect.

SINCE our investigation of the problem of Israel's dependence upon Babylon has taken the form of inquiry into separate questions, it may be advisable that we should—even at the cost of some repetition—gather together the conclusions to which we have been led.

We have seen that the country in which Israel became a nation was deeply influenced by contacts with Babylon and Egypt for many centuries before Israel appeared upon the scene; though we may still think that the judgment which would make Canaan a mere province of Babylonian culture and civilization is considerably too sweeping. We have recognized, too, that Israel was a nation compounded from various elements, one of which came from Mesopotamia; and that some of Israel's ancestors were resident in Palestine throughout the whole of the Egyptian sojourn. In view of these facts we are bound to admit that there are good grounds for supposing that the culture of Israel may have been influenced by Babylon, both directly, and also indirectly through the older inhabitants of Canaan. At the same time we think

that it is easy to exaggerate the extent of this influence on Israel's religious traditions, and that it is not sufficient to assume, on *a priori* grounds, that such influence was dominant.

A study of Babylonian religion reveals it as a highly organized cult, which in some respects shows close affinities with the religion of Israel. In particular the same view of life after death is found in both religions. In the religious poetry of Babylonia we found evidence that there were pious souls seeking after God, "if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him"; but we failed to discover even here the ethical sense of sin which is so marked in the Old Testament. The religion of Babylonia is characterized, too, by a great preponderance of the magical element, which, though no doubt the lower forms of Hebrew religion found it congenial, was utterly abhorrent to the writers of the Old Testament. The claims made for the existence in Babylonia of anything comparable with Hebrew prophecy have no sound basis, and even in its highest developments the religion of Babylonia falls far below the level of Old Testament prophecy. Above all, our investigation into the origins of Hebrew monotheism seemed to discredit the assertion that they are to be found in Egypt or Babylonia, and to show that this great truth was developed among the Hebrew people.

Babylonian influence upon the creation story of Gen. i appears to be comparatively slight, and such points of resemblance as are found between *enuma elish* and Genesis are possibly derived from common

sources. Further, while the J story makes use of materials found in the fragmentary Babylonian accounts, there is no cogent evidence of direct dependence. Above all, though it is quite probable that the writers of the early chapters of Genesis were acquainted with the Babylonian stories, their attitude is rather one of revulsion from than dependence upon Babylonian models. We could find no complete Babylonian parallel to the story of the Fall; and, granting that certain motifs which occur in the latter may be traced also in Babylonian literature, these are so widespread in folk-lore that they certainly do not demonstrate dependence.

While the traditions relating to the ante-diluvians contain elements which are common to the Old Testament and to Babylonia, and imply, at the lowest, a common source, the striking features in which the Biblical deluge story agrees with similar stories in the Babylonian records fall short of demonstrating any indebtedness upon the part of the Old Testament. It is, indeed, not certain that the Babylonian traditions are native to Babylonia. Even if it be conceded that for some material features Genesis is indebted to the Babylonian stories, this is a matter of small importance when we consider that the spirit which informs the Biblical story is utterly different from anything we encounter in the alleged parallels.

There is no substantial evidence that Babylon possessed any real equivalent to the Hebrew Sabbath, though between the words *Sabbath* and

*shapattum* there is probably an etymological connection. Similarly, though the name *Yahweh* may occur in the Babylonian sources, it is in the highest degree improbable that the Babylonian deity worshipped under that name has anything in common with the God of the Hebrews apart from the name.

Babylonian legislation is unquestionably shown to present many notable points of contact with that of Israel, but many of these are of common Semitic origin. The parallels to the Decalogue, offered from Babylonian and Egyptian sources, while they certainly make it easier for us to believe that the Decalogue in its simplest form is more ancient than modern criticism generally is wont to suppose, give us no cogent reason for deriving from Babylon or Egypt Israel's ethical conceptions.

We conclude, then, that those who so confidently belittle the traditions and religion of Israel as being no more than copies from Babylonian models fail to justify their contention by evidence which will survive the test of close scrutiny. That in some details Israel is debtor to Babylon may be taken as reasonably proved : these details, however, affect rather the outward form than the spiritual content of the traditions. To a much greater extent it is true that both Babylon and Israel share a common Semitic inheritance. The Pan-Babylonian theory as to the source of this common heritage, highly ingenious as it may be, has no solid foundation. Nor can the more reasonable hypothesis that the testator was a great Amorite empire be accepted as

proved. We have, at present, no sufficient evidence for a solution of the problem, and must wait patiently until our knowledge of the earlier history is more complete.

Religion has its external forms and its inward spirit. In the structure of a great Gothic cathedral we may see a material expression of the Christian faith : the forms and ceremonies of the worship beneath its roof bring us nearer still to the heart of the matter. But the religion itself is spiritual, and dwells in the souls of the worshippers. In the construction of the wall which encircles part of the close at Salisbury the builders used stones taken from the ruins of the cathedral at Old Sarum, which the new sanctuary superseded ; and in many places the eye is arrested by old carved stones which stand out from the more modern work in which they were embedded. We may liken the Hebrew religion on its outward side to a temple built upon the site where earlier there stood an oriental shrine. In the fabric of that temple we can trace old stones from the ruins of its predecessor : some of the new stones used, too, were clearly taken from the same quarry that furnished material for the older building. It may even be true that the forms of worship within the walls of the new temple retained elements derived from the services of the oriental shrine. But that which we most value in the Hebrew religion was not borrowed : it grew out of the spiritual experiences of Israel's great leaders and prophets.



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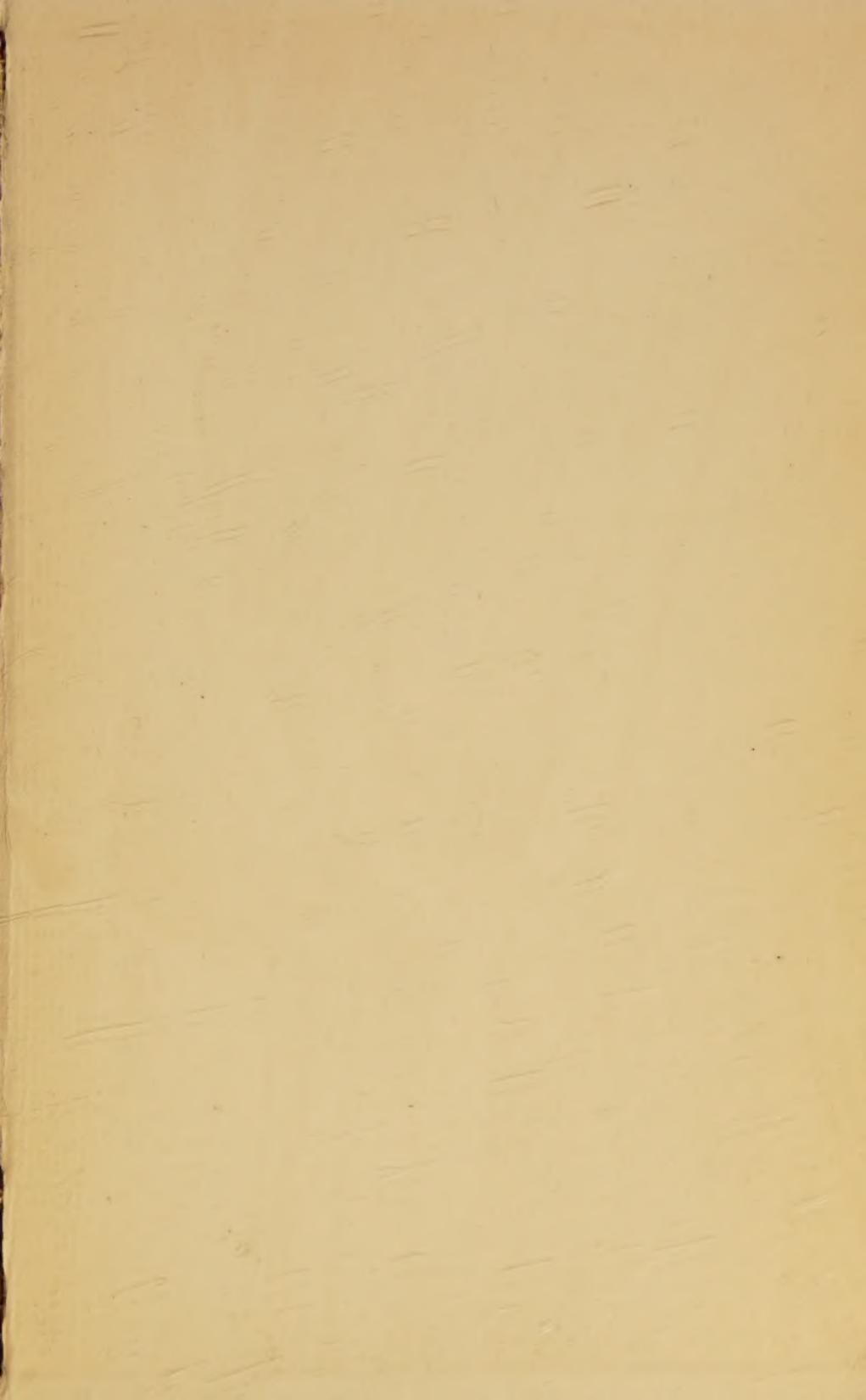
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